

# Enacting citizenship: a study of three educational initiatives in Brazil

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## Abstract

The centrality of education in forming citizens has in recent years become a prominent concern among theorists and practitioners alike. However, the literature on the subject often fails to acknowledge the complexity both of the diverse ends of citizenship and of the educational means to achieve them. This study explores these issues in three contrasting initiatives in Brazil: the Landless Movement, which promotes a conception of citizenship based on the workers' collective struggle for justice; the Plural School, which aims to democratise the school system based on an ideal of social inclusion; and Voter of the Future, aiming to promote political participation via established structures of liberal democracy. Empirical data on the three initiatives was collected in the form of documents, classroom observations and interviews with coordinators, teachers and students. The study analyses the differences between the conceptual schemes of the three initiatives, the ways these translate into pedagogical programmes, the facilitators and constraints on implementation and the effects on students. A theory of 'curricular transposition' is developed, in order to explore the processes through which normative ideals are materialised in educational programmes, and to explain the problematic 'leaps' between the ideal and the real, and between ends and means. Key elements for citizenship learning identified in the case studies are the participation of pupils and teachers in the design and implementation of the programmes, the use of dialogical pedagogy, the existence of democratic management structures in schools, and of opportunities for pupils to engage in political action in the wider society. The notion of 'seamless enactment' is proposed to refer to this enhancement of political learning through the full participation of teachers and students and harmonisation of ends and means. Finally, wider implications for the role of education in developing political agency are considered.

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## Acronyms

CAPE	<i>Centro de Aperfeiçoamento dos Profissionais da Educação</i> (Centre for the Development of Education Professionals)
FTAA	Free Trade Area of the Americas
GMO	Genetically modified organism
IBGE	<i>Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística</i> (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics)
INEP	<i>Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira</i> (Anísio Teixeira National Institute of Educational Studies and Research)
MED	<i>Ministério da Educação e do Desporto</i> (Ministry of Education and Sport)
MST	<i>Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra</i> (The Movement of Landless Rural Workers)
NCPs	National Curriculum Parameters
PPP	Politico-pedagogical plan
PS	Plural School
PT	<i>Partido dos Trabalhadores</i> (Worker's Party)
SMED	<i>Secretaria Municipal de Educação</i> (Municipal Secretariat of Education)
TRE	<i>Tribunal Regional Eleitoral</i> (Regional Electoral Tribunal)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VF	Voter of the Future

## Portuguese terms

<i>Acampamento</i>	MST camp
<i>Acampados</i>	Residents of an MST camp
<i>Assentamento</i>	MST settlement
<i>Assentados</i>	Residents of an MST settlement
<i>Escola nova</i>	New school (educational movement in Brazil)
<i>Regimento</i>	Legal document outlining the rules and norms governing the school
<i>Grêmio</i>	Pupil association
<i>Favela</i>	Shanty town
<i>Sem terra</i>	Landless
<i>Mística</i>	Rituals and ceremonies in the MST

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

Formal education has a close historical link with the notion of citizenship. The development of national systems of education from the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards was both a cause and a consequence of the establishment of the nation-state and the universalisation of citizen rights, responsibilities and identity (Green 1990). However, there has been an upsurge of interest among academics and policy-makers since the 1990s, raising debates over the ideals of citizenship and the possibilities of achieving them through education. This thesis aims to explore the complex relationship between education and citizenship, particularly in terms of the problematic disjunctures between aims and means, and between the ideal and the real – ones often overlooked in the literature.

There are contrasting ideas underlying recent concerns with citizenship. From a conservative perspective, society can be seen as being beset by a number of problems that are threatening its order, cohesion and stability. Apathy and disaffection among young people, according to this view, is leading to decreasing confidence and participation in conventional political processes, and consequently to a loss of legitimacy for governments. A breakdown in traditional social relations and norms has led to 'anti-social behaviour' and a loss of social capital. Increasing immigration has posed challenges to cultural unity and social harmony. The promotion of citizenship, therefore, is seen to be necessary in order to increase people's sense of belonging in society, to ensure that they have respect for the law and fulfil their duties to support the community and the nation.

On the other hand, an interest in citizenship is possible from a very different perspective, one concerned with a radical deepening of democracy. From this view, the focal point is that 'citizens' do not have equal rights (social, civil or political), and that even in those societies in which formal rights have been guaranteed to all, some groups and individuals fail to exert the influence or receive the share of society's goods due to them. Citizenship, here, is a means of achieving greater equality in society and active participation in decision-making.

Education can be seen to have a fundamental role in both of these conceptions. There are two principal ways in which citizenship relates to education, depending on direction of influence:

1. Citizenship as a guarantee of the right to education
2. Education as a means to more effective citizenship

Firstly, citizenship 'enables' education in the sense that access to schooling is regarded as a fundamental right. Secondly, education 'enables' citizenship in the sense of providing people with the knowledge, skills and values required for exercising their rights and fulfilling their responsibilities. While the former is a major concern, particularly in countries whose school systems have poor coverage, it is the latter that has engaged most academic interest, due to the contested nature of citizenship and educational responses to it.

Unterhalter (1999) presents a more nuanced analysis of the relation between the two. The complexity of the question, in her analysis, stems from the 'amorphous' terrain of education, which:

[E]ncompasses concern with formal institutions of learning, like schools and universities, and the people that work in them, the pedagogical processes that go on in them, and the ways in which they are organised, governed, and located in relation to state and civil society. But education is also embedded in a wider set of relationships, and is thus caught up in debates about epistemology, language, nationalism, culture and notions of self. It is also intrinsic to economic planning and a wide range of social policy debates. (p.100)

Education is in Unterhalter's analysis seen to relate to citizenship in three ways. Firstly, the former can be seen as a "conduit" to or "servant" of the latter, intended to make it "develop and flourish". Secondly, education and citizenship can be seen as interlocking spaces in which the latter is an experience of and is expressed through lifelong learning. The third approach, on the other hand, sees citizenship as enabling education, but views the latter as a relatively autonomous space, one that is "public, private and intermediate". This notion of the particularity of education as a process that is not wholly defined or explained by theories of citizenship is one which underpins this thesis. Through the empirical study, there will be an exploration of instances in which citizenship is created and reformulated in schools, and the ways in which these processes escape from the bounds placed on them by normative political ideals.

There is a strong case for stating that all education is education for citizenship, given that every learning experience modifies to some extent our functioning and identity as citizens. This study, however, will not be able to assess the general effects of education, but instead will focus only on those initiatives which are consciously aimed at developing citizenship. Within this range of intentional initiatives, an important distinction needs to be made between those that take the form of a discrete curriculum subject and those which do so through a number of different subjects, through the structures or ethos of the school, or through a non-school site. In addition, not all educational initiatives aiming to promote citizenship go by the same name. A number of different labels are used, such as political, civic, democratic and human rights<sup>1</sup>. In this thesis, I will generally use the overarching term 'education for citizenship' (EFC) to describe all these different types of initiative, although 'citizenship education' is also used. I understand EFC to refer to any education that addresses the individual as a member of a polity (rather than, say, as a member of a family, a cultural group or an economic system).

This thesis explores these questions in the context of three initiatives, none of which goes by the name of 'citizenship education', yet which are all integrally tied to the aim of promoting citizenship. All are located in Brazil, a country that is a challenging context for the promotion of citizenship due to its extreme inequalities and the political marginalisation of certain groups. At the same time, it is one that displays a variety of innovations in the area of education and social policy, involving local governments, social movements and NGOs. The acute nature of the problems and the energy and diversity of the responses make it an important context to study.

Each of the three initiatives aims to empower young citizens, but according to contrasting conceptions. The first, Voter of the Future, a programme run by the electoral tribunals, aims to make young people aware of their rights and responsibilities as voters in a liberal democratic system. The second, the Plural School, is a framework of policy and practice for schools in the city of Belo Horizonte, based on the aim of social inclusion. Lastly, the Landless Movement is a social movement for agrarian reform that runs a network of schools based on the goal of social transformation through working class struggle. These sites were chosen due to their contrasting orientations and approaches to education (a more detailed rationale for the choice is given in chapter 3). Empirical data on each case was collected in order to explore how some of the theoretical questions raised in the literature are addressed in real contexts.

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<sup>1</sup> Gearon (2003a), in relation to this question, makes the distinction between 'implicit' and 'explicit' forms of citizenship education.

This thesis is concerned with citizenship from a radical democratic perspective. Active political participation, in the context of universal rights and recognition of difference, is here understood to be an intrinsic good. It is essential for all people to have the capability for participation, and desirable for them to exercise that capability as far as is possible, both in the interests of themselves personally and that of society as a whole. The aim of this thesis is to explore the ways in which education can contribute to the development of this capability for participation, particularly for groups that are currently marginalised.

### **Curricular transposition**

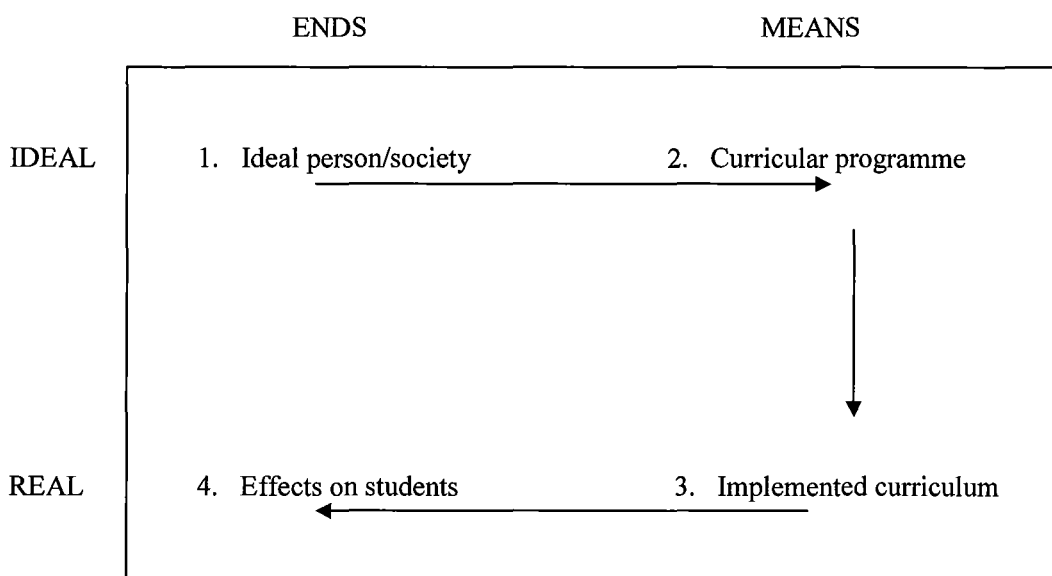
In exploring these ideas, this thesis proposes an original theoretical framework that I refer to as 'curricular transposition'. It draws on the concept of 'didactic transposition' developed by Francophone theorists such as Chevallard (1985), Conne (1986), Perrenoud (1986; 1992) and Tochon (1991). Didactic transposition refers to the ways an item of knowledge changes as it becomes part of a curricular programme. For example, Einstein's theory of relativity does not exist in the same form in schools as it does in the scientific community: it undergoes certain modifications when moving from the latter to the former. In the theory, a distinction is made between 'external' and 'internal' transposition, the former referring to the transposition of knowledge into school curricula as outlined above, and the latter to the transposition of the official curriculum into the content taught in practice by teachers (Perrenoud 1998). Tochon (1991) calls the latter 'pedagogical transposition'. The concept of didactic transposition was initially developed in relation to didactics of mathematics, and is most applicable to this area and to the natural sciences, yet Perrenoud (1998) and others have proposed extensions to the theory to include those school disciplines that stem from social practices rather than factual knowledge. There are clear points of contact between didactic transposition and Bernstein's (1990; 1996) notions of the *recontextualisation* and *reproduction* of discourses from the field of knowledge production in the school setting.

However, the fact that didactic transposition takes knowledge (or, in some cases, practices) as its starting point, means that the theory works well in relation to individual subjects, where the movement of knowledge from society to school can easily be seen, but is not as readily applicable to the curriculum as a whole, being a collection of various areas chosen on the basis of



fundamental beliefs and values. It is necessary, therefore, in an analysis of transposition, to take account of this previous stage at which there exists an ideal of a human being or society to be developed. Educational undertakings have an element of purpose that is not captured in didactic transposition. This thesis, therefore, extends the ideas of the didactic transposition theorists to encompass a broader conception of education. *Curricular transposition* refers to the materialisation or concretisation of aspirations or ideals into educational programmes, approaches and activities.

Curricular transposition shows the movement between four stages: the original ideals or aspirations motivating the initiative, the educational programmes designed to realise them, their implementation in practice and their effects. The figure below shows these stages in graphic form. The second and third stages correspond broadly to the common distinction made between the 'official' curriculum and the 'unofficial' or 'taught' curriculum, and the fourth stage to the 'achieved' or 'attained' curriculum (e.g. Mullis et al. 2005). Perrenoud (1998) outlines a similar scheme showing the movement between 'current knowledge and practices in society', 'formal curriculum, objectives and programmes', 'real curriculum, content and teaching' and 'effective and durable learning of the pupils' [author's translation]. (Later in the article he replaces this model with another more complex one revolving around the notion of competencies). However, Perrenoud's model represents a linear relation and does not show the movement between planes of ideal/real and ends/means. A two-dimensional model is therefore proposed in its place, incorporating these aspects, and focusing on the emergence of curricula from underlying aspirations, rather than 'knowledge and practices':



This scheme applies generally, but will here be discussed in relation to citizenship education. The process in question involves four stages. Firstly there is a conception of a valued end (in this case citizenship). From that, an ideal educational programme is created, which is then modified as it is implemented in a real context. The implemented programme then influences the students (not necessarily in the way originally envisaged), affecting their abilities and identities as citizens. By way of an example, an authority might have a conception of valued citizenship as loyalty to the nation (1), conceive that this would best be promoted through inspiring works of national literature (2), implement this through schools although with some teachers presenting critiques of the works in question (3), leading to mixed effects among the students (4).

This process involves 'leaps' between different planes: from that of ends to that of educational means (in the case of 1-2 and back in 3-4) and from the ideal to the real (in the case of 2-3). These leaps are highly problematic. An ideal of citizenship is hard to achieve through education due to constraints on devising educational methods to realise it, on implementing those methods in an institution or other setting, and on obtaining the desired change in students. There are further questions arising from the relationships between the planes, which are not as discrete as the figure suggests (there may be intersections between educational means and citizenship ends, as explored by Unterhalter 1999). In addition, the direction of movement is not as straightforward as it appears, since there can be bidirectional influences between each. Ideals, for example, can be modified in the process of creating an educational programme. These questions will be explored further in the chapters that follow.

This scheme, therefore, highlights the four main research questions on which this study is based:

1. What forms of valued citizenship underlie citizenship education programmes?
2. How are educational programmes created on the basis of these ideals?
3. How are they transformed during implementation in practice?
4. What are the resulting effects on students?

The four questions together address the overarching concern of the thesis as a whole: understanding the apparent disjunctures between the educational practices and experiences going by the name of citizenship education, and the political aspirations on which they are based.

## Structure of the study

In order to study these phenomena, data was collected on the conceptualisations of key actors (co-ordinators, teachers and students) and on the implementation of the initiative itself, in the classroom and other relevant school and non-school sites.

The empirical research focuses on four areas, relating to the stages of curricular transposition:

### *A. Identifying the conceptualisations of the initiatives and of their key actors.*

This involves the underlying understandings of society, the state and the role of the citizen, and the relationship of these with education. Included in this is an exploration of the tensions in understandings of citizenship and the ways in which educational initiatives and their actors resolve these conceptual conflicts.

### *B. The development of educational approaches, methods and activities*

At the most basic level, this study identifies the different means adopted by each initiative and relate them to their underlying conceptions. For example, understandings of the obstacles to effective citizenship in terms of oppressive social relations may be seen to require a transformation of the teacher-student relationship. An alternative understanding of citizenship as applied rationality may require the development of critical thinking.

### *C. Implementation*

The study assesses the extent to which the desired approaches and methods are actually implemented in schools. It explores the factors (whether relating to the agency of teachers, institutional structures, pedagogical processes etc.) influencing this process.

#### D. *The effects of the programmes*

This thesis does not provide a full evaluation of the initiatives, since this would require a larger scale longitudinal study. The observations and interviews do, however, provide varied perspectives on the immediate effects of the programmes.

Before addressing the context in which the three cases are located, there will first be a review of literature on citizenship and education, and a discussion of the methodology employed in the study.

## Chapter 2

### Normative disjunctures: a review of literature on citizenship and education

Writing on citizenship and education can be conceptual (involving primarily the discussion of underlying ideas) or empirical (involving experience of real contexts). However, within these two broad categories there are further important distinctions. Firstly, conceptual literature can be divided into that which is normative (making prescriptions) and that which is clarificatory (exploring the concepts and developing taxonomies). An example of the former is Crick (1999) in which he lays out the philosophical foundations of his vision of citizenship education for England. An example of the latter is McLaughlin (2000), in which he explores the content and implications of the Crick Report, but without arguing for a particular vision. Some of these studies have general relevance, while others are written in relation to specific contexts, sometimes using an empirical context as a springboard for a normative argument (e.g. Enslin 2000).

Empirical literature on education and citizenship also falls into different categories. Firstly there are descriptive studies that provide accounts of the aims and the methods of initiatives, sometimes in a comparative framework, such as Davies and Issitt (2005). Related to this is a form of descriptive study which involves empirical research to observe how an official framework is implemented in practice in schools (e.g. Cogan & Morris 2001). In addition there are studies of the attitudes and perspectives of key participants, particularly students (e.g. Torney-Purta et al. 2001). Lastly, there are evaluations, assessing how effectively the aims of an initiative have been achieved (e.g. Chaffee et al. 1998).

For the purposes of this review of the literature, there will be three sections: normative, descriptive and evaluative. The normative section, in this case, will include conceptual writing as well as normative studies relating to specific contexts. The descriptive section focuses on empirical studies of education for citizenship (EFC) initiatives around the world, with the exception of evaluations, which will be dealt with in the final section. These three forms of study have distinct motivations, aims, methodologies and epistemological assumptions. The categories have been used for the purposes of ordering the wide-ranging literature, and are not intended to

represent an exhaustive taxonomy: there is clearly a good deal of overlap between the different sections. The categorisation shows the multiple ways in which academic writing addresses education and citizenship, both in aiming to understand it and to influence it. Part of the motivation for this thesis is the belief that there are some limitations in the ways the body of literature relates to the practice of EFC, and the ways the different parts of the literature relate to one another.

The literature on education and citizenship is so large that it is not possible to make a comprehensive overview<sup>2</sup>. This review will cover works that are representative of different parts of the body of literature, and that are most relevant to the issues of interest to this study. The works referred to are predominantly in English, although many refer to contexts outside the English-speaking world. Some of the literature specific to the Brazilian context will be discussed in chapter 4. In addition, the review will focus principally on citizenship learning in the school context, rather than that in other spheres, such as participation in social movements (e.g. Kilgore 1999; Woodin 2005).

## The normative literature: aims

To say that citizenship education is contested is, in the words of Davies and Issitt (2005:391), “now almost a cliché”. The aims of citizenship education – the development of a ‘good’ or ‘effective’ or ‘empowered’ citizen – depend on fundamental understandings of the nature of the polity, the balance of liberty and equality and so forth. The *means* of achieving these aims also depend on contested areas of pedagogy, such as the extent to which knowledge is negotiated and constructed with students, and approaches to neutrality. However, a significant portion of the literature aims to propose a definitive version of citizenship education or to gain consensus around a particular conception. A prominent recent example is Banks et al. (2005), which presents the ideas of a ‘Consensus Panel’, proposing a set of basic principles to guide educators in their work. Nevertheless, the field resists unifying efforts, and remains diverse and fragmented.

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<sup>2</sup>An extensive review was carried out by Osler and Starkey (2005b), but limited itself to the period 1995-2005 and predominantly to the UK.

There are a number of possible ways of categorising citizenship. McLaughlin (1992) proposes a conception of *maximal* and *minimal*, a continuum relating to the elements of identity, virtues, political involvement and social prerequisites<sup>3</sup>. In relation to the first of these, he states:

On 'minimal' views, the identity conferred on an individual by citizenship is seen merely in formal, legal, juridical terms.... On maximal terms...the citizen must have a consciousness of him or her self as a member of a living community with a shared democratic culture involving obligations and responsibilities as well as rights....  
(p.236)

Another categorisation is provided by the IEA cross-national study (Torney-Purta et al. 2001), which distinguishes between *conventional* and *social-movement-related* citizenship, the former indicating participation through the formal procedures of liberal democracy and the latter through direct mobilisation, particularly on single issues. However, categorisations of this sort, while useful in particular contexts, are necessarily restrictive in their focus and fail to acknowledge the rich diversity of conceptualisations of citizenship. As McLaughlin's (1992) scheme acknowledges, there are a number of elements in debate, and opponents on one issue may be together on another. The analysis of aims in this review will be structured through four of these tensions identified in a previous study on Brazil (McCowan 2004b; 2006a): rights and duties; universality and difference; the local, the national and the global; and criticality and conformity. These categories have been chosen since they relate to rich and complex debates in the literature, and ones that in a number of ways cut through conventional right-left distinctions. The discussion will focus mainly on the debates within the literature on citizenship education specifically, but unavoidably there will be a reference to the wider debates on citizenship as a whole. This first section addressing the aims of EFC is followed by a discussion of the varying means of implementation.

### **Rights and duties**

Some conceptions of EFC are explicit in their emphasis on either rights or duties. A number of commentators (e.g. Osler and Starkey 2005a; Gearon 2003b), for example, call for citizenship

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<sup>3</sup> Implications of minimal and maximal forms for citizenship education are drawn out in Osler and Starkey (2005a).

education to be based primarily on human rights. The emphasis here is on the universal nature of basic rights to survival, well-being and dignity and the extension of these rights to marginalised groups, both within the nation and in impoverished regions of the globe. These rights are largely enshrined in international declarations, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989. One of the advantages of the human rights approach, as opposed to other positions emphasising political and socio-economic equality, is the wide consensus around them, and the high level of support it can count on from governments and international agencies.

On the other hand, some conceptions are strongly weighted in favour of duties. The 1937 publication entitled *Experiments in Practical Training for Citizenship*, for example, puts forward a view of citizenship education whose:

...objects are to make possible the transference of those loyalties which a child develops for his [sic] school, and which so often cease there, to the wider loyalties of after life and to instil in him a desire to serve the community (Happold 1937: 6).

As well as self-sacrifice, this paradigm aims to promote “leadership, self-reliance and self-control, equipping boys<sup>4</sup> to fulfil better their responsibilities as good and loyal citizens” (p.11). Another example of a duties-heavy approach is the *Education for Active Citizenship* promoted by Conservative government in the early 1990s (Wringe 1992).

Differing emphases on rights and duties are also evident in two major approaches to citizenship: the liberal and the civic republican (Kymlicka 2002; Heater 1999). The former focuses on the rights that the state guarantees for the individual. In T. H. Marshall’s (1998) well-known analysis, these are divided into civil, political and social, developed in Britain in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries respectively. The civic republican position, on the other hand, drawing on models of the ancient Greek city states, emphasises the duties of citizens towards the state, particularly those of active participation in decision-making. The latter framework can be seen in Oldfield (1990) drawing on the work of Machiavelli, Rousseau, Tocqueville and Hegel, and to some degree in the work of Bernard Crick (1999; 2000). The latter’s *In Defence of Politics* (1964) presents a positive portrayal of the processes of debate and compromise which contrasts with the customarily negative associations of ‘politics’ and ‘politicians’.

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<sup>4</sup> The project seems only to be for boys: presumably girls would have had different training.



There are right- and left-wing versions of both of these approaches. The resurgence of civic republicanism is partly due to the dissatisfaction of conservatives, nationalists and communitarians with a perceived over-emphasis on rights and neglect of duties (Etzioni 1996), as well as images of disintegrating states and threats to majority ethnic groups by growing immigration. These right-wing models of the civic republican position emphasise the need for social coherence, patriotism and assimilation of minority groups. Robert Putnam's (1993) study on local government in Italy, and his ideas on social capital (Putnam 2000), have been influential in this renewed interest in civic virtue as a determinant of good governance.

Alternative views of civic republicanism have their inspiration in the participatory democracy of Rousseau (1968) and more recent formulations of Pateman (1970), Macpherson (1977) and Barber (1984). Here, citizens do not just choose representatives but participate personally in decision-making processes as far as is possible. Kymlicka (2002) describes approaches like these which see participation as an intrinsic good as *Aristotelian* republicanism, and distinguishes them from *instrumental* republicanism, where participation is seen as a necessary burden for maintaining democratic institutions.

The divide between the liberal and civic republican positions, therefore, is not a simple political one. There are also right and left versions of the liberal approach, depending on whether only very minimal rights are upheld (such as property rights in the case of libertarians) or the substantial rights required for social justice (in the case of egalitarian liberals). While the difference between 'right' and 'left' relates to the importance given to equality, the difference between liberal and civic republican approaches to citizenship relates to the importance given to political participation. As Kymlicka (1999: 82) states, "there will always be a portion of the population who have little or no desire to be politically active" and that "a liberal democracy...should not compel people to adopt a conception of the good life which privileges political participation as the source of meaning or satisfaction". Civic republicans, on the other hand, consider it essential that individuals have an active participation in politics and civil society, both for the effective functioning of a democratic society and for the wellbeing of the individual.

While the liberal-civic republican divide is to some extent one of rights versus duties, this is clearly not the only dynamic possible. Some conceptions of citizenship are 'minimal' or

alternatively 'maximal' in both rights and duties. The libertarian perspective, for example, makes few demands on the citizen, but equally guarantees only the right to property. Socialism, on the other hand, guarantees extensive social rights, while at the same time making considerable demands on the citizen in terms of commitment to the common good and working for societal rather than personal ends (Allman 1999; Hill 2002; Rikowski 2004).

The question, therefore, is clearly not an either-or. However, neither is it one solely of 'quantity'. The important issue is not only 'how much' rights and duties, but also 'what' rights and duties. In 19<sup>th</sup> century Britain (for the restricted part of the population that was considered to have full citizenship at least), there were substantial political and civil rights, but a largely free market system operated with little social welfare. In contrast, state socialist governments Soviet Union provided for substantial social rights, but few civil and political ones.

Yet it is misleading to imply that rights and duties function independently. Human rights based conceptions of EFC appear to favour the former over the latter. However, adopting the international declarations of rights on which these approaches are based entails a considerable commitment to global justice and the transformation of current structures and practices. In this conception, rights and duties are 'two sides of the same coin'. On the other hand, Osler and Starkey (2005a) observe that:

to insist that there are no rights without responsibilities is problematic. All human beings have entitlements to rights. To deny certain individuals their rights (e.g. the right to a fair trial or the right to education) simply because they have failed to fulfil particular responsibilities is to undermine the basis of human rights. (p. 156)

In the view of the authors, therefore, there is not "a straightforward one-to-one equivalence between rights and responsibilities".

Conceptions of citizenship in education, therefore, show high levels of diversity in relation to rights and duties. For each conception, it is necessary to observe the balance between rights and duties, the degree of 'minimality' or 'maximality' in relation to both rights and duties, and the exact nature of those rights and duties.

## Universality and difference

Despite the significant differences between the liberal and civic republican models outlined above, both make similar assumptions about the fundamental sameness (or potential sameness) of citizens. This *universalist* approach has come under sustained attack from those who consider that formal equality can mask discrimination and exclusion in practice, and that *difference* must not be relegated to private sphere. Unterhalter (1999: 102-103) states that feminist writing on the state and education policy highlights how:

...governments, through an appeal to an abstract concept of the citizen, stripped of all qualities save subjective rationality and morality, have been able to maintain and perpetuate social divisions based on gender, race ethnicity, sexuality and disability.

While these critiques are based on multiple factors, the most developed part of the literature is from a feminist perspective. Unterhalter (2000b) explores the conceptualisations of women's citizenship in four documents influential in the field of education and international development: the Jomtien declaration, the World Bank's *Priorities and Strategies for Education*, the Delors Commission Report of UNESCO, and the Beijing Declaration of the World Conference on Women of 1995. In the first two, women are cast in a predominantly passive role, being biologically essentialised and homogenised as a group, and relegated to a family role in private arenas. The Delors document recognises the importance of rights and solidarity, yet only the Beijing document:

grapples with the contradictory, problematic and gendered nature of citizenship which feminist scholarship has identified – that citizenship is the necessary condition for the realisation of personal autonomy and emancipatory projects but is also an exclusionary instrument creating privileged spaces for some but not for others. (p.100)

The problems of formal equality are also expressed by Preece (2002:29) in relation to citizenship education provision in England and Wales:

It is assumed that gender differences can be addressed by claiming equality of opportunity within existing definitions and social structures, rather than questioning the power relationships which perpetuate exclusion. The concern remains that whilst

awareness of diversity may increase along with potentially enhanced interest in political life, structures and systems which reproduce inequality will remain unexplored.

These limitations in the National Curriculum are highlighted by commentators such as Gamarnikow and Green (1999), Osler and Starkey (2001), and Harber (2002a) who criticise its neglect of issues such as race as well as gender, its oppressive communitarianism and its lack of a framework that is genuinely inclusive of minorities. Gillborn (2006) describes the National Curriculum provision as a 'placebo', designed to give an impression of action towards social cohesion and inclusion, while at the same time mechanisms such as high stakes testing continue to work against these aims.

Issues of difference in citizenship have come to the fore on account of demographic changes in the contemporary world and the increasingly multi-ethnic nature of countries such as the USA, UK, Canada, Australia and France. Kymlicka (1995) has developed a theoretical framework for the incorporation of group rights for minorities in a liberal democratic polity, based on a principle that groups should be able to retain their cultures and not be subsumed into the dominant national group, but that no culture should be exempt from questioning and scrutiny.

Prominent theories of citizenship that avoid suppressing or repressing difference have been developed by political theorists such as Benhabib (1996), Young (1990), Yuval Davis (1997) and Mouffe (1992). Some theorists (e.g. Enslin 2000, Enslin & Horsthemke 2004), however, argue that particularist conceptions of citizenship can themselves be problematic, with, for example, the traditional conceptions of ethnic communities in South Africa leading to oppression on the basis of other factors such as gender. They argue for universal conceptions, but with attention paid to local context.

The question of universality and difference is complex since it involves questions of the boundary between the public and the private, individual and group rights, and possible conflicts between Fraser's (1998) two components of justice – *recognition* and *distribution*. The multiple points of contact between citizenship and education in relation to difference, explored by Unterhalter (1999; 2000a), have already been highlighted. Care must also be taken with 'totalising' conceptions of difference, with all other factors aside from social class being lumped together, ignoring the particularities.

The demands of sustaining a cohesive polity in diverse modern societies have led some commentators to advocate the practice of ‘deliberation’ – an engagement in reasoned, respectful discussion with others. According to Gutmann’s *Democratic Education* (1987), schools must from an early age encourage the *deliberative character* in children through both the explicit and the hidden curricula, and create the conditions for democracy by placing people of different religions and races together in the same classroom (p.52-53). Rawls’s (1972; 1993) requirement for the use of *public reason* in the political sphere, as opposed to private reason based on religious or other comprehensive doctrine, also gives an essential role to schools as a common ground where young people must learn to interact, communicate and negotiate in a public way. Enslin et al. (2001) presents three models based on the work of John Rawls, Seyla Benhabib and Iris Young, concluding that deliberative education can successfully resolve the tension between tolerance and autonomy. Deliberation, and its development in schools, are valued by these commentators since it is seen to make possible a viable democratic state without excluding individual and minority voices.

A final issue concerning difference is that of childhood. Generally in education there is a tension between the aims of preparation for future life and attention to the current interests of children. These issues are particularly prominent in citizenship education due to the ambiguities of children as, firstly, recipients of adult protection and in need of preparation for future rights and responsibilities and, secondly, as bearers of specific rights and participative roles in the present. A defence of the latter position is provided by Osler and Starkey (2005a), advocating, instead of “citizens-in-waiting”, a ‘3 Ps’ approach of protection, provision and participation, using the UN *Convention on the Rights of the Child* as a base. However, EFC is very commonly characterised by an (often unacknowledged) notion of future citizenship – as seen below in the case of Voter of the Future.

### **The local, the national and the global**

In previous centuries, citizenship was developed in states (first city-states, then nation-states) whose identity and unity was either naturally unproblematic or was made less problematic by ideological or violent suppression of minorities (Green 1990). Yet, as indicated above, rising immigration and changes in technology and economic relations since the latter stages of the 20<sup>th</sup>

century have put the unified integrity of the state under strain. With the processes of globalisation, many commentators have called for global forms of citizenship, moving away from parochial self-interest towards cosmopolitan concerns for human rights and justice for all (Osler & Vincent 2002). The weakening of the nation-state has also brought increasing prominence to the *local*, with identity formed and political activity often carried out at this level. Citizenship education initiatives vary in the extent to which they target these different levels.

The forms nationalism assumes is likely to differ greatly between countries – for instance expressing itself in distinct ways in former (and current) imperial powers and their colonies. The ways in which states have historically pursued nationalist agendas through schools is analysed by Nelson (1978). He identifies three dimensions:

1. Development of positive feelings toward those rituals, ceremonies, symbols, ideas and persons that express or incorporate these [nationalist] values.
2. Development of competencies related to operating as a national citizen (voting, reading, speaking).
3. Development of negative feelings toward countries, ideologies, symbols and persons considered contra-national.

(p. 142)

Miller's (1993) analysis of possible justifications for nationalism concludes that despite its lack of rational grounding, it can, in moderate and non-racist forms, be a positive force in terms of moral and political well-being. He acknowledges first that "a nationality exists when its members believe that it does" (p.6). The implications for education are brought out well in the following passage:

Finally it is essential to national identity that the people who compose the nation are believed to share certain traits that mark them off from other peoples.... National divisions must be natural ones; they must correspond to real differences between peoples. This need not, fortunately, imply racism or the idea that the group is constituted by biological descent. The common traits can be cultural in character: they can consist in shared values, shared tastes or sensibilities. So immigration need not pose problems, provided only that the immigrants take on the essential elements of national character. (7)

Much education for nationalist citizenship has historically worked to achieve this end, forging a common identity from disparate cultural and political elements (Green 1990).

Miller's analysis is convincing in showing that identification with the nation can potentially be a force for the good, and that in many cases is the only possibility for a viable polity and moral community. At the same time, it is undeniable that in many cases it is far from being that and instead is a vehicle for the suppression of minority ethnic, cultural, ideological or religious groups, the stifling of independent critical thought and the promotion of imperialism, xenophobia and parochialism.

The shortcomings of the national as a focal point, the rise of regional unions like the EU, and the increasing awareness of processes associated with the label 'globalisation', has led to calls for a new form of citizenship education, one advocating empathy and solidarity with all peoples, along with rights and responsibilities that are valid across national boundaries. Here some might question whether it is possible to use the term 'citizenship' education at all: since there is no global polity (aside from institutional apparatuses with limited powers such as the UN, WTO etc.) it is hard to speak of a 'citizen' of the world. In this case citizenship is a moral rather than a legal status, but nevertheless serves an important function in terms of redirecting understandings and practices.

Davies (2006) presents an overview of literature on education for global citizenship, assessing whether the concept, in the absence of a global polity, is a valid one for orienting the curriculum. She concludes that it can be highly valuable, but faces significant obstacles in relation to, among other things, curriculum overload. Osler and Starkey (2003) present a justification of cosmopolitan citizenship based on the grounds that "equality is undermined by discriminatory practices and public discourses that exclude minorities or which marginalise them within the imagined community of the nation" (p. 244). Instead of a common identity based on history or land, students must recognise common humanity and interdependence inside and outside borders, expressing solidarity particularly to those who are the victims of globalisation (Osler & Vincent 2002). These sentiments are echoed in the work of writers like David Held (Held & McGrew 2003), who sees that the nation-state is not the only locus for democracy, and Delanty (2000), who proposes a form of cosmopolitan citizenship, forging a middle way between the new

reactionary nationalism and the false universalism of globalisation, with a strong base in community.

A number of commentators advocate activism in the local community, while retaining broader feelings of solidarity on a global level (an approach seen in the slogan 'think globally, act locally'). Even national-citizenship based programmes, such as the English National Curriculum provision, place the strongest emphasis on participation in local arenas. In some instances, however, this can be a disempowering emphasis, favouring unthreatening local actions such as community volunteering, while shielding young people from larger-scale political actions directed at the underlying political, economic and social order (Wringe 1992).

### **Criticality and conformity**

A central question in citizenship education concerns the extent to which learners are encouraged to conform to authority and existing political structures, or alternatively to question and challenge them. On the one hand, it can be argued that it is necessary to instil in young people certain unwavering allegiances: these may include a love of nation (or other form of state), so that they might further its interests for the benefit of all its members; respect for its laws, for the sake of order and security; and support for its institutions and the government of the day, to ensure the effective functioning of the political system. This conformist approach to citizenship education, which can have both right and left-wing orientations, is strongly associated with the nationalist citizenship education approaches discussed above (e.g. Nelson 1978). An early justification can be found in Hobbes's (1651/1996) *Leviathan*, in which a strong and unchallenged state is seen to be necessary to control people's naturally destructive instincts.

However, there is also a tradition in liberal democracy of critical scrutiny of the elements outlined above, with its roots in Locke's (1690/1924) rejection of Hobbes's all-powerful state and assertion of the right and duty of the people to alter or remove a government that is not upholding their interests. According to this second approach, society will only maintain effective institutions if they are subjected to critical assessment, enabling them to be reformed if necessary. In addition, the quality of governments is seen to be dependent on the political awareness of the voters and their ability to evaluate the different candidates. These requirements call for an education



designed not to galvanise loyalty, but to promote a questioning attitude towards the state and its institutions.

Even though, as Curren (1997) points out, critical citizenship is not intrinsic to the concept of democracy, many commentators see it as desirable even in the most minimally democratic system. Kymlicka (1999: 82) states that:

The ability and willingness to engage in public discourse about matters of public policy, and to question authority...are perhaps the most distinctive aspects of citizenship in a liberal democracy, since they are precisely what distinguish 'citizens' within a democracy from the 'subjects' of an authoritarian regime.

McLaughlin (1992: 238) states in relation to the 'minimalist' conception of civic education that, "it may involve merely an unreflective socialisation into the political and social status quo, and is therefore inadequate on educational, as well as other, grounds".

Yet despite the educational advantages, authorities may be discouraged by the possible risks, as emphasised by Winch (2004: 475):

There is an inherent danger of instability in the critical outlook once it has been developed. The habit of analysis and criticism cannot be turned off by society at will, and so it is almost inevitable that it will be exercised in ways that are unforeseen and unwelcome to some.

Galston (1989), in this way, presents a counter-argument to criticality, proposing that citizenship education should not require children to question their situation. He makes a distinction between *philosophic* and *civic* education, where the purpose of the latter is "not the pursuit and acquisition of truth, but rather the formation of individuals who can effectively conduct their lives within, and support, their political community" (p.90). He states:

[R]igorous historical research will almost certainly vindicate complex "revisionist" accounts of key figures in American history. Civic education, however, requires a more noble, moralizing history: a pantheon of heroes who confer legitimacy on central institutions and constitute worthy objects of emulation. (p. 91)

Callan (1997) calls this *sentimental civic education*, tracing it back to Plato's appeal to myth as a means of increasing loyalty to the state. He states:

[S]entimental political education depends in part on an offhand pessimism about the ability or desire of ordinary citizens to understand the rational grounds for the political institutions under which they live. (p.102)

These debates raise the question of the values around which EFC should be constructed. Centring allegiance on democratic values – such as Crick's five procedural values (Crick & Porter 1978) – may be particularly desirable in multi-ethnic states, where there may be significant minorities who do not share the history and identity of the majority. Yet it is not certain whether this can be achieved in practice without other forms of shared tradition. Kymlicka (1999) cites the case of Canada, where despite a large degree of unity on political principles, there is still strong secessionist sentiment in Quebec. It is certainly more difficult to build cohesion around abstract principles than around the familiar and emotive symbolism of land, race and nation.

In summary, from these four tensions it has been seen that the aims of citizenship education are not only contested, but also highly complex. The contestation is not just between, say, traditional and progressive, free-market and welfare, or authoritarian and democratic, but expresses itself through a number of intersecting issues, which more often than not form piecemeal rather than entirely coherent frameworks. These issues are not always neatly associated with emphasis on equality (the customary gauge of political position): a 'left-wing' initiative might, for example, prioritise rights, difference, the global and criticality, but equally it might prioritise responsibilities, universality, the national and conformity.

### **The ideas of Paulo Freire**

Before discussing means, there will be a brief discussion of the work of Paulo Freire. His thought is highly relevant here as it presents a strong challenge to the liberal principles underlying most literature on citizenship education. It has also a direct influence on two of the three cases presented in the thesis.

Of all 20<sup>th</sup> century educators, Freire developed one of the strongest critiques of conventional schooling, and constructed a radical alternative that has made the difficult transition from academic text to classroom practice. He is best known for his work in the field of adult literacy, where he defended the importance of 'reading the world' as well as 'the word', that is to say, developing wider understanding of society at the same time as learning technical literacy skills. His ideas were first implemented in literacy programmes in his native Brazil, but with his exile in 1964 he developed a worldwide following, his influence extending to mainstream school education as well. Freire has been a major influence on a number of contemporary educationists and educational movements, from the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua to Actionaid's Reflect programme implemented in various countries in Africa and Asia.

One of Freire's well known maxims is that education can never be neutral. Education will always have political implications, even if it is not addressing explicitly political issues:

There never is, nor has ever been, an educational practice in zero space-time – neutral in the sense of being committed only to preponderantly abstract, intangible ideas. To try to get people to believe that there is such a thing as this... is indisputably a political practice, whereby an effort is made to soften any possible rebelliousness on the part of those to whom injustice is being done. It is as political as the other practice, which does not conceal – in fact, which proclaims – its own political character. (Freire 1994: 65)

This claim has an ontological and epistemological basis. According to Freire's view, there is a dialectic of subjectivity and objectivity in the interaction of human beings and the world, with consciousness modifying and being modified by external reality. Human beings, however, are not universally aware of their potential for transforming the outside world, being 'immersed' in their reality. (This is particularly true of 'oppressed' peoples, who may believe that their poverty and oppression are inescapable and somehow fated). He states:

In order for the oppressed to be able to wage the struggle for their liberation, they must perceive the reality of oppression not as a closed world from which there is no exit, but as a limiting situation which they can transform. (Freire 1972: 31)

Education, according to Freire, is fundamentally tied to this question, serving either to reinforce learners' sense of lack of potential for acting – being objects – or to 'liberate' them by increasing understanding of the possibilities of transformation – becoming subjects (Freire 1985; 1996). There is no escape, therefore, for educators: they must choose which of these dynamics to foster. Cavalier (2002: 257) expresses this point well:

There is no choice but to act. What Freire makes clear is that the *apparent* choice not to act is, in the ethical perspective he takes, actually a decision to act in a way that continues the status quo and thus dehumanises all people, that perpetuates injustice, and that assures the present unjust situation will continue into perpetuity.

These processes are not only liberating or domesticating in relation to individual consciousness, but also to the material conditions of society, since the oppression of social groups, or alternatively liberation from oppression, depends on their critical consciousness. Education, therefore, becomes a fundamentally political act. If people are not encouraged to be critical, they will accept injustices and not work together to overthrow oppression and transform society.

Freire also asserts that people have an ontological vocation to *humanisation*, moving towards a greater realisation of their humanity. Oppressive forces in society (and 'banking' methods of teaching that emphasise transmission) *dehumanise* by restricting the agency of individuals, stifling their critical consciousness and ability to act.

The concept used most commonly by Freire in relation to this liberation through education is *conscientisation*. This is the process of gaining critical awareness as a means of transforming society:

To surmount the situation of oppression, people must first critically recognise its causes, so that through transforming action they can create a new situation, one which makes possible the pursuit of a fuller humanity. (Freire 1972: 29)

Conscientisation in relation to the individual learner is the process of developing the sense of being a *subject*, of appreciating one's ability to intervene in external reality. The *conscientised* person is:

[S]ubject of the processes of change, actor in the management and development of the educational process, critical and reflexive, capable of understanding his or her reality in order to transform it....' (Gajardo 1991: 40)

In his early work (1976), the process of conscientisation was described as having three stages, with the learner moving from magical, to naive, and finally to critical consciousness. However, this categorisation does not appear in his later work, and he moves towards a view of conscientisation:

[N]ot as a progression through a finite series of steps with a fixed set of attitudes and behaviours to be achieved, but rather as an ever-evolving process. Constant change in the world around us requires a continuous effort to reinterpret reality. (Roberts 1996: 187)

Freire is emphatic that this learning process is one of *praxis*, a dialectic of reflection and action. The gaining of critical consciousness will not of itself transform the world: 'this discovery cannot be purely intellectual but must involve action; nor can it be limited to mere activism, but involve serious reflection' (Freire 1972: 47). In addition, conscientisation cannot be a purely individual development, and must take place in the context of the collective, in mutually supporting horizontal relationships.

There are two key pedagogical features in the process of conscientisation: *dialogue* and *problematization*. The former, in Freire's conception, is much more than verbal interaction. Traditional education is seen to be ineffective as it involves a mono-directional transmission of knowledge from teacher to student: the so-called *banking* education. Conscientisation can only be achieved through a dialogical encounter, whereby the student is fully involved in the educational process.

Problematization involves the presentation of learners' reality so as to reveal its problems or contradictions. This allows learners to distance themselves from their immediate situation, and gain a critical perspective on it. Freire emphasises that education must start from learners' own experience of the world:

Accordingly, the point of departure must always be with men and women in the 'here and now', which constitutes the situation within which they are submerged, from which they emerge, and in which they intervene. Only by starting from this situation – which determines their perception of it – can they begin to move. (Freire 1972: 66)

The wide dissemination of Freire's ideas has been accompanied by a number of forceful critiques. One of the strongest and most prolonged sources has been feminist writers, who see in Freire insufficient attention to the specific struggles of women. Initially, these criticisms were directed at the use of language in his early work, which, along with the majority of literature of the time, used 'he' and 'man' to include (and, thereby, effectively exclude) women. Freire did heed these objections, and in his later work was careful to use non-sexist language. In general, a significant shift can be seen in his later work to acknowledge forms of oppression other than social class – gender, race, disability etc. – in conjunction with an increasing influence of postmodernism, in contrast to the modernist emphasis of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. However, writers like Weiler (1996) argue that his work remains highly problematic from the perspective of gender:

[E]mphasizing this point [the question of pronouns] and have it stand for feminist critique allows Freire to ignore more fundamental questions about his conceptualisations of liberation and the oppressed in terms of male experience, or the failure to address the specificity of questions in actual history and discourse. (p. 368-369)

Other critiques have focused on the philosophical underpinnings of his thought. Glass (2001) identifies three flaws in the core of his argument: firstly, there are insufficient grounds for his claim that humanisation, however desirable, is an ontological *vocation*:

Freire thus has to accept that his critique of domination emanates from a specific historical and cultural location and must be made on the basis of contingent ethical and political argument rather than universal ontological appeals. (p.20)

In the same way, democratic socialism, however justified on political and ethical grounds, cannot be seen as an ontological necessity for humanity. Lastly, Freire's epistemological position lacks

clarity, oscillating between a “radical indeterminateness of knowledge” and “a natural science kind of certainty”:

When arguing for “methodological rigour” and “right thinking” that yields knowledge in a “higher stage” than “common sense”, Freire did not acknowledge the depth of the problems thus posed for the constructivist, pragmatic approach to knowledge formation that he insisted upon. (p.21)

However, despite these critiques of the content of his work, Freire continues to be a powerful source of inspiration for radical educators around the world. As Weiler (1996) states, he has to a large extent become a ‘sign’, a mythic force, and his ideas and biography, regardless of any inconsistencies and failings, drive forward an educational movement.

### The normative literature: means

As seen above, a great deal of the philosophical writing on citizenship education focuses on its aims. These ends are highly complex and it is right that there should be substantial debate about them. Yet, there is a tendency in the literature summarised above, particularly in political philosophy outside education departments, to see education in an overly straightforward fashion, imagining that once aims have been established, it is a relatively simple task to implement means of achieving them. This study, on the other hand, understands there to be significant problems surrounding the realisation of any normative ideal of citizenship. This section will assess firstly the ways that citizen capacities are broken down into elements of knowledge, skills and values, secondly the pedagogical approaches to achieving them, and lastly the difficult question of neutrality.

McLaughlin (1992: 237) states:

Maximal conceptions require a considerable degree of explicit understanding of democratic principles, values and procedures on the part of the citizen together with the dispositions and capacities required for participation in democratic citizenship generously conceived.

This passage alludes to three elements – “understanding” (and knowledge), “dispositions” (or attitudes) and “capacities” (or skills) – which all citizenship education programmes must address to some degree. These elements in fact constitute *aims* of education rather than means, but have significant implications for the types of means chosen. Theorists approach these elements in very different ways, relating not only to the content of the knowledge, skills and values, but also the balance between the elements. White (1996), for example, argues that education must involve itself in the development of the *virtues*, such as trust and courage, which are essential for the functioning of a democracy. Callan (1997), also advocates the cultivation of civic virtues in schools.

The 1970s political literacy movement in the UK, led by Bernard Crick, Derek Heater and Ian Lister among others, advocated the teaching of political skills and democratic values in place of the existing emphasis on constitutional knowledge. According to Lister (1987: 49):

The programme was less interested in promoting knowledge of politics as subject-content than in developing the political skills necessary for informed and effective participation in politics. Accordingly it encouraged a shift towards much more activity-based teaching and learning (such as problem-solving exercises; role-play and socio-drama; and games and simulations). It was concerned about supporting values – but not the values of loyalty and allegiance to the powers that were but the values of democracy itself (which could give authority to those powers).

Initiatives, therefore, differ in the balance struck between knowledge, skills and values, the content of each, and the ways these are transmitted. In terms of the last of these aspects, methods of teaching citizenship in the classroom might be grouped into four types:

- A. Explanation
- B. Investigation
- C. Discussion
- D. Simulation

Type A involves teachers or other experts, either orally or through texts, transmitting knowledge to students about political institutions, current affairs and so forth. Investigation (type B), on the other hand, involves the students researching issues themselves, extending their knowledge of



topics of interest and developing information-gathering skills. Type C extends this by allowing discussion and debate to develop, in which students can state their views and modify them in the light of those of others. Lastly (type D), schools can stage contexts for participation, such as trials, elections and parliaments, in which the procedures are as close to reality as possible, but with no real effect. A number of books (e.g. Gearon 2003a) have been produced for teachers of citizenship in the UK which explore different ways of working with these forms.

However, it can be argued that what is significant in forming citizens is not the curricular content itself, but the underlying structures or character of the school (as seen above in the discussion on deliberation). Pupils can learn to be citizens via their participation in school councils or through hierarchical teacher-student relations (structures) as well as through classes on political institutions and national heroes (curricular content). This is sometimes referred to as the *hidden curriculum*, although elements of structure are not necessarily hidden and might be fully explicit and official. The influence of 'hidden' factors on the development of citizenship, however, is often unacknowledged, and can lead to contradiction, in which the democratic intentions of the course are in direct conflict with the authoritarian nature of the institution. These multiple influences are highlighted by Harber (1989), who identifies five ways in which African schools are involved in political learning: taught courses (i.e. Civics); other curriculum subjects; national symbols; school organisation; schools and the recruitment of political elites (whereby particular schools facilitate entry into positions of political power). Even though all of these are influential, only the first would normally be considered as 'citizenship education', and the last would rarely be officially acknowledged.

Similar issues are raised through the notion of 'ethos' (or 'climate'), which, while more positive in connotations, is in many ways the same as the hidden curriculum (it can similarly refer to something either 'intended' or 'experienced', McLaughlin 2005). Its nature and effects are extremely difficult to determine, but there is widely held faith (e.g. in the Crick Report) in its influence on student outcomes in the official curriculum, and its deeper and broader effects on student development. Those texts, like the Crick Report, using the language of *ethos*, tend to hold less political conceptions of institutional structures, while those using the language of *democratisation* tend to see the school as a highly political site (e.g. Apple & Beane 1999). Harber (2000; 2002b) argues strongly for the introduction of democratic structures and relations in schools, as a means of addressing violence in schools, and fostering a democratic culture in the wider society. The theorists associated with the critical pedagogy movement (e.g. Giroux &

McLaren 1986; hooks 1996; Shor 1992), drawing on Freire's work on *dialogue*, also see democratic pedagogical relations and school structures as essential.

In addition to on-site activities, schools can provide the opportunity for students to become involved in a real experience of citizenship. For example, writing letters to MPs, participating in local environmental campaigns, or marching to oppose a policy of the national government. These are much rarer due to the restrictions sometimes arising from the age of the students and the fear that many schools have of engaging with political issues.

Mill, in *On Representative Government* (1861/1991), argues that political participation is fundamental for human development. There are three elements to this development: virtue (particularly unselfishness and responsibility), intellectual stimulation (originality and cultivation) and activity (energy, courage and enterprise) (Mansbridge 1999). Mill sees that participation in public activities such as jury duty is essential for moving beyond narrow self-interest and taking responsibility for others, with significant societal as well as individual benefits. Pateman (1975) also sees participation as essential to individual political development, focusing on the notion of political efficacy, and also on the sense of the collective, co-operation and the democratic character.

Mill's and Pateman's ideas, however, cannot be applied in their entirety to participation of children and teenagers at school. The types of public service Mill had in mind are not all available for people in this age range, while Pateman's ideas relate principally to participation in the workplace. It is therefore relevant as much to the transformation of structures *within* schools, and the establishment of participatory structures there, as in the facilitation of opportunities for participation outside. Nevertheless, there are strong arguments in favour of facilitating participation in real political activity for young people as a means of citizenship learning.

An important distinction needs to be made between participation in forms of *political* activity, such as that envisaged by Pateman, and that based on community volunteering. While voluntary work can sometimes have political motivations or consequences, often it is aimed at bringing localised change for the good, while leaving the underlying structures of society intact. Happold (1937), for example, as mentioned above, intends students to develop the virtues of good citizenship by participating in voluntary work (as well as group activities such as physical training and parades). This conception underlies British institutions such as the Boy Scouts and

Girl Guides. Volunteering, and not participation in democratic processes also underlies the *Education for Active Citizenship* critiqued by Wringe (1992).

In summary, the following chart shows the difference spheres in which citizenship learning can take place.

	Activities	Structures and relations
<b>School</b>	A. Explanation B. Investigation C. Discussion D. Simulation E. Participation	Pedagogical relations (teacher-student) Democratic/authoritarian nature of institution Ethos
<b>Wider society/non-school</b>	A. Political participation B. Volunteering	Social hierarchies, political structures etc.

Firstly, citizenship education activities can occur either within school or outside it. As seen above, classroom activities can fall into one of four categories A-D. Participation in decision-making bodies such as school councils can constitute a further element here (E). Activities in the community, or the wider society, might be divided into those which involve voluntary work, and those which involve political participation, the latter entailing efforts to influence government and policy. However, these activities must also be seen in the light of the underlying relations and structures both in school and society (in the right hand boxes), which provide the context in which these activities take place. Within school at least, efforts can be made to alter these elements, for example, by creating more horizontal relations between teachers and students, and giving the latter greater say in decision-making. Citizenship education, therefore, can be expressed through three of these four boxes (altering the structures and relations of wider society may be an intended long-term consequence, but will not normally be part of the means of citizenship education).

An important question regarding the means of implementing EFC is bias. Some of the past opposition to the introduction of citizenship education in the UK has been based on the problems

of maintaining political neutrality (e.g. Flew 2000; Scruton et al. 1985; Tooley 2000). The position of the Hansard Report on political education, however, was that, "Some bias is not only probable but, if we are moral beings, unavoidable" (Crick & Porter 1978: 5). Indoctrination could, in this view, be avoided by teachers becoming aware of their own biases and making pupils aware of theirs, and by developing understanding of which groups in society hold different views and why they do so. Crick (1999: 344) states:

Neutrality is not to be encouraged: to be biased is human and to attempt to unbiased people is to emasculate silence. Bias as such is not to be condemned out of hand, only that gross bias which leads to false perceptions of the nature of other interests, groups and ideas.

As seen above, Freire also considers neutral education to be impossible (and he goes further than Crick by stating that attempts to be neutral are a veiled means of perpetuating injustice), proposing that teachers should state their opinions, but not impose them in an authoritarian way: "Respecting them [the learners] means, on the one hand, testifying to them of my choice, and defending it; and on the other, it means showing them other options..." (Freire 1994: 65). Roberts (1999: 20), explaining this feature of Freire's thought, draws a distinction between, "(a) transmitting a political or moral view and (b) doing this in a dogmatic way".

EFC initiatives differ in the extent to which the values on which they are based are made explicit (Kerr 2003). They also differ in terms of their openness to the discussion of controversial issues. There are strong arguments for not removing these controversial issues from a young person's educational experience, even given the dangers of indoctrination and risks of causing offence to students of strongly held views. As the Crick Report states:

[T]o omit controversial subject-matter is to leave out not only an important area of knowledge and human experience but the very essence of what constitutes a worthwhile education. (QCA 1998: 10.4-10.5)

Many of these controversies, rather than being "based on (say) ignorance, misunderstanding, prejudice or ill will" are "grounded in deep and non-trivial disagreement about matters of (say) an epistemological or ethical kind" (McLaughlin 2003: 150). These 'grounded' controversies involve "reasonable disagreement" and cannot be resolved simply by presenting the correct

evidence. Crick<sup>5</sup> and others believe that far from being avoided in education, engagement in discussion of these grounded controversies is an essential preparation for political life where the conflicts of society must be resolved. Nevertheless, this places considerable demands on teachers' skills and sensitivity (McLaughlin 2000).

In general, an area about which little is said in any part of the literature is the relationship between the ideal of citizenship held by an initiative (the first stage of curricular transposition) and the methods adopted to achieve it (the second). Osler and Starkey (2005a) propose a set of pedagogical principles on which democratic schooling should be based: dignity and security; participation; identity and inclusivity; freedom; access to information; and privacy. The significant element here is not the content of these principles, but their derivation. They are seen to emerge directly from the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and intend not to achieve aims in the future, but, as discussed above, to realise children's rights in the present. These are pedagogical principles consistent with a set of rights for children and not for developing future citizens.

Very often, however, democratic principles such as these are seen as a preparation for future democratic participation. An example of this is the set of proposals in Parker et al. (2000) in which deliberative approaches in the classroom are seen to create deliberative people who will engage in deliberation in the wider society outside the school and in the future. This assumption rests on common sense more than empirical research (although some studies show associations between 'open' classroom environments and the development of civic knowledge and values, e.g. Torney-Purta 2001). Yet, however sensible and probable it may sound, it is far from being a certainty. If conservative education does not necessarily breed conservative people (as in the cases of Marx, Gramsci, Orwell etc.), neither does progressive education necessarily breed progressives. The complications largely involve the element of values: even if the skills of deliberation, criticality, dialogue and so forth can be acquired, the dispositions associated with them may not. This is particularly likely in contexts where school is seen by young people as irrelevant, foreign or restrictive on their liberties. In this case, values are often adopted in purposeful opposition to those held by the institution.

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<sup>5</sup> The Crick Report advocates three possible approaches to neutrality in relation to controversial issues: those of 'neutral chairman', 'balanced' and 'stated commitment' (QCA 1998). These are supposed to be used in conjunction, and teachers are not supposed to adopt one exclusively.

A number of questions emerge from this overview of normative writing. How straightforward is the process by which means are chosen to fulfil ends? Are the former established through logical connection to the latter, or because they are empirically shown to work, or simply through tradition? How far are the aims explicit when constructing the means? Are some methods (e.g. lecturing, participatory group activities) necessarily linked to particular conceptions (e.g. minimal citizenship, active critical citizenship)? These are questions that the current study will attempt to address. Next, there will be an assessment of the descriptive literature.

## **The descriptive literature**

A number of studies have emerged since the 1990s that describe and analyse the orientations of EFC initiatives, particularly those that form part of national education policy. Many of these are comparative studies, or single-country studies that have a comparative intention. These often respond to the needs of countries implementing citizenship education for the first time (like the UK in 2002), or with renewed interest (e.g. USA, Australia) to gauge the range of different approaches worldwide. The most ambitious example of this form is the 24 country study carried by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) (Torney-Purta 1999). The National Foundation for Educational Research has also carried out a 20 country study on understandings of 'active citizenship' (Nelson & Kerr 2006). This section will provide a brief overview of studies referring to contemporary contexts.

## **The diversity of citizenship education**

A great deal of recent writing has focused on the UK, on account of the attention gained by the recent introduction of citizenship education. Much of this involves critiques of the Crick Report (highlighted above), but some empirical studies are emerging. Halpern et al. (2002), for example, surveyed the existing practices of citizenship education in schools before the introduction of the subject in the National Curriculum. The study (focusing on one county) found that most schools were in fact already implementing citizenship in a number of forms, both in terms of curriculum content, school ethos and extra-curricular activities. The authors consequently recommended a decentralised approach to implementation, valuing the diversity of these school approaches.

Davies and Issitt (2005) assess the different approaches to citizenship education in Australia, Canada and England. In broad terms, Australia is characterised by “developing thinking skills through material drawn from traditional and academic subjects”, Canada by “remembering information about constitutional structures”, and England by “exploring their personal perspectives in the context of society's values” (405). They state:

In England the inclusion of very many matters relevant to individual young people, including health, personal finance, helping others and charities, suggest that a very broad-based focus on personal responsibility is being promoted.... The personal is foregrounded at the expense of a sharper political awareness. (Davies and Issitt 2005: 400)

Osler and Starkey (2001) compare recent initiatives in England and France, identifying the major motivation of current citizenship education programmes as concern at weakening social cohesion and the political disengagement of the young, and fear for the future of democracy itself. While differing in key areas such as emphasis on national symbols (stronger in the French programme), both countries have an underlying aim to promote values of respect for human rights, obedience to the law, and strengthening of the national political and social unit. Neither, however, is seen to be genuinely inclusive of minorities.

Canada is an interesting case, being in Kymlicka's (1995) terms both a multi-nation and multi-ethnic state. The IEA case study on the country (Sears et al. 1999) identifies some of the key features of citizenship education aiming to address these issues. Firstly, there have for some years been efforts to develop French language proficiency in the English-speaking communities and vice versa, which are seen to have been successful in making the new generation almost bilingual. Policies addressing the position of the indigenous nations have been less successful, although the teaching of native languages is increasing. Despite the continuing challenges, Canada is seen to have made significant advances since the report of civic education from 1968 that:

focused almost exclusively on political and military matters, avoided controversy, did not connect material to the present, and emphasised the memorisation of ‘nice, neat little acts of parliament’. (p. 125)

This assessment, however, contrasts with the less positive image provided by Davies and Issitt (2005), who observe a continuation of dry, content-based approaches.

Studies on East Asian states (e.g. Ho 2002) show different forms of citizenship education from those evident in Europe and North America. Japan, Hong Kong and Taiwan, for example, place higher priority on civility and morality than active individual participation, according to Morris and Cogan (2001). Cummings (1996: 197-198) puts forward regional and cultural explanations for differences in Japan:

The segmented western approach of focusing on national institutions and narrowly featuring (cognitively based) civic education is greeted with incredulity by Japanese educators.... education there is viewed as an integral part of the broader social and cultural order.

Different concerns are seen elsewhere in the world. The tensions between a multi-ethnic pluralism approach and individual rights are shown by Enslin (2000) in the context of South Africa. Since the end of apartheid, nation-building has been promoted in the country as a means of reducing inequalities and building unity across diverse groups. One of the problematic elements here is 'customary law', the legal traditions of different ethnic groups which have been partially incorporated into national law. While this accords some respect to the ethnic groups in question, the traditions are seen to have been manipulated in favour of patriarchal interests and to perpetuate discrimination against women. A 1997 report entitled *Gender Equity in Education* is seen to take a different stance, by:

Setting an appropriate civic agenda for equal citizenship for girls and women by taking gender and custom out of the private and, by implication, giving priority to citizenship as rights, over citizenship as membership. (p.297)

These forms of marginalisation in conceptions of citizenship are also shown by Fox (2003), in relation to Lao. Here, the citizenship education provision, while upholding socialist ideals of equality, serves to exclude women and ethnic minorities through the norms presented in its textbooks, in which segments of society are "rendered invisible" (page 406).



Tensions in relation to the cultural values underlying citizenship education are also seen in studies on the former communist countries of Eastern Europe and the Russian Federation (e.g. Clough et al.1995; Dorczak 1995; Zajda and Zajda 2002), which are confronting complex issues of ethnic diversity, history and religion.

Studies focusing on national initiatives, therefore, address some of the issues raised in the normative literature, particularly those of social cohesion, multiculturalism and the development of democratic skills and values.

Forms of education that aim to promote solidarity and responsibility outside national borders have been present for many years, even though in the past the language of the 'global' was less prominent. These include human rights, peace, environmental and development education among others. Lister (1987) describes these together as the 'world studies' movement, and describes its emergence thus:

Before 1974 the dominant tradition celebrated the myth of the apolitical nature of schools; in 1974 a new dynamic appeared in the form of political literacy; with world studies a new dynamic appeared in the form of global perspectives and the search for a social education appropriate to living in an interdependent world. (p.47)

No country as yet has wholeheartedly embraced cosmopolitan citizenship (and it is debatable whether a nation-state could do so and still ensure its own continuing existence) yet there have been a number of small scale initiatives. Osler and Vincent (2002) examine how these types of initiative are faring in four countries – Denmark, England, Ireland and the Netherlands – concluding that while there is substantial work being carried out by NGOs, particularly in relation to teaching materials, there is insufficient governmental support: “although governments recognise a role for global education, it is rarely a funding priority with the Ministry of Education” (p.111).

Much of the normative writing on citizenship education assumes that the provider will be a national government. However, there are many other bodies that can provide citizenship education, including local governments, social movements, NGOs, religious bodies and private organisations. Nelson (1978: 142) is surely wrong when he states, “There is a context within which all political education takes place. That context is the nation-state.” Civil society

organisations have, in many countries, become key political actors as well as providers of public services, and are consequently strongly involved in questions of citizenship. An important factor here is that the nature of the provider is likely to have an effect on the conceptions of citizenship underlying the initiative. A public education system will tend to promote allegiance to the nation-state, whether implicitly or explicitly, and is unlikely to develop highly questioning attitudes towards the government. It is also likely to encourage participation in established political procedures such as voting in general elections. A social movement may promote a wide variety of attitudes towards the state and may be opposed to it. It is also likely to encourage political participation via popular mobilisations.

Fischer and Hannah (2002) assess the *Programa Integrar* of the Brazilian metalworkers' union. Here, training in metal working skills is combined with classes in neo-liberal economic policy, dependency theory and the world economic crisis, as well as skills of negotiation for union leaders. According to Fischer and Hannah, this is part of a new movement in which:

The making of public policy and the allocation of state resources are becoming increasingly understood as the responsibility of society, and not only the organs of the administration of the state apparatus. Thus, different collective bodies are pursuing and discussing forms of popular participation that complement, but also question, the traditional forms of representative participation. (p.262)

Other cases in Brazil (which has a large number of these non-state initiatives) will be described in greater detail in chapter 4.

John (2000) describes the Children's Parliament in Rajasthan, an Indian state with high poverty and low levels of educational provision. Children aged 6-14 are elected to the Parliament by their peers, enabling them to exercise real power over the running and evaluation of their schools as well as learning about politics and electoral processes. This initiative is distinct from many simulations and school councils in that it involves an increase of democratic control over the development of local education policy – in the form of the *Night Schools*, where young people can study without relinquishing their day work – and allows the exercising of some real power for children. Nevertheless, practical circumstances may indeed confine it to being a model rather than a real Parliament. Research on school councils in the UK context, which occur in state

schools and are endorsed by national policy, has tended to show positive effects for the students involved, but without a radical democratisation, and with discussions often limited to subjects such as toilets and school uniforms (Baginsky 1999; Taylor 2002).

This brief view of localised initiatives indicates a departure from the concerns of the national frameworks – predominantly those of cohesion and allegiance – towards a concern with political empowerment, not only in the future as adult citizens, but in the present as children and teenagers.

### **Experiences of implementation**

While many of the studies of official programmes focus on intentions, there are a smaller number which observe more closely the process of implementation of EFC programmes and the issues and problems arising from it. As Morris and Cogan (2001: 113) state:

It is dangerous to rely on descriptions of the nature of national policies and the formal curriculum as a basis for understanding what goes on in schools and what pupils learn. These provide a framework within which schools operate – they do not ensure consistency of provision.

The authors assess a six-country study of civic education (Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, Thailand, Taiwan and the USA), with two important observations emerging. Firstly, there was seen to be significant variation between individual schools operating within the same framework. These differences to a large extent followed socio-economic lines, with those from disadvantaged backgrounds being taught social responsibility, and those from wealthier backgrounds, active and critical citizenship (these differences were less acute in Japan, Taiwan and Thailand). Secondly:

From the perspective of the pupils, there was often a very clear awareness of the disjuncture between their schools' precepts and its practices. It was the latter that were seen to define the values that the school thought were important. Thus pupils were acutely aware when the rhetoric of school policy was seen to be in conflict with other messages that were conveyed, especially with regard to the high value placed on obedience and on passing high stakes examinations. (p. 199)

This echoes concerns raised above about the lack of consistency between official and hidden curricula.

Cavarría (2005) raises different issues in her assessment of the implementation of civic education in primary schools in Mexico. Severe restraints are placed on teachers due to the lack of textbooks and pressures of limited curriculum time, as well as a general lack of value placed in the subject in relation to the core disciplines. Nevertheless, against the odds, teachers are seen to adopt a number of strategies to ensure an effective provision, working creatively with time and resources. These include: 'globalising themes' – working with a number of topics in the same session in order to achieve full coverage in the limited time available; getting the students to research topics for themselves; designating students as responsible for different subject areas, ensuring continuing work in the absence of the teacher; and use of other didactic supports such as activity books.

This is significant since it points to the key position of teachers in the realisation of EFC, often ignored by normative studies and by broad descriptive accounts of national programmes. Not only are teachers central to the effective implementation of a national policy or normative frame, but they are agents in their own right, transmitting their own specific conceptions of citizenship.

Walkington and Wilkins (2000) provide an analysis of the world-views of teachers and their realisation of citizenship education in the classroom. In terms of their basic world-view, the teachers interviewed were placed on a continuum from individualistic/alienated to critical/reflective/engaged. This related strongly to their vision of citizenship: on the one hand a restricted, formulaic vision of compliance and on the other a more critical, multifaceted and global vision. These positionings were seen to correspond to teaching styles, placed on a continuum from transmission to participatory learning (including role-plays, simulations and collaborative group work). These findings are another clear indication of the importance of the teacher as agent in the process of citizenship education. Nevertheless, the authors point to certain institutional constraints on this agency: some teachers with a critical/engaged perspective, for example, were discouraged from implementing a participatory framework on account of the current emphasis on basic skills, forms of teacher education not conducive to participatory approaches and lack of the basic literacy skills necessary for the students to engage in independent enquiry.

A limitation of the above study is the reductive nature of its scales, both in terms of world-view and pedagogy. Views of citizenship are clearly more complex than a two dimensional scale: it is possible, for example, to be deeply engaged in political affairs, but maintain a solely national frame of reference and rely on traditional avenues of participation such as voting and a restricted citizen identity. In addition, the transmission/participatory division is not entirely adequate, since there may be times when a critical educator is justified in engaging in transmission, and, secondly, no mention is made of the content, only form. Nevertheless, the study is significant in drawing attention to the pivotal role of teachers in the implementation, and the essentially ideological nature of citizenship education and its pedagogy.

An account of a different sort of EFC initiative, one which is localised and not officially endorsed by the state, is provided by Westheimer and Kahne (2000). They present a case study of an urban school in the USA which has developed a conscious framework of preparing students for active engagement in social transformation. This is based largely on an enquiry-based project approach with links to action in the local community. As in the UK, initial constraints are imposed by the national tendency towards basic skills and high stakes testing. In relation to the implementation within the school, three major issues arise: firstly there are legitimate concerns among teachers at school that civic education in a crowded curriculum may distract them from developing core academic skills. Secondly, the project approach is seen to have limitations, being challenging and time-consuming for teachers, and not the most effective form of learning in all instances. A third and highly significant issue concerns neutrality. While in some cases the school presents both sides of the argument regarding controversial issues, in others it takes a clearly defined position. This at times created problems with parents who did not share the same beliefs, and administrators who wished to steer clear of controversy. These concerns reflect the theoretical debates seen above: the school in question clearly supports the position of critical pedagogy in seeing that some perspectives need to be actively promoted, both because the counter views have often been excessively dominant in society and (following Freire) because so-called neutrality is often tacit support for the injustices of the status quo. The authors also point to potential problems discussed above of active participation in the community, since students may not always have sufficient information to participate in an appropriate manner:

Many kinds of action such as attending a protest or working with a community organization, that would be appropriate for citizens, may not be structured in ways that

enable a teacher to be sure a given action will be safe or educationally valuable. Thus, while experiences at Mills [the school] demonstrate the substantial educational potential of civic action as part of students' curriculum, there are reasons to temper blanket support of this practice. (p.35)

In summary, a number of themes from the normative debates are also prominent in empirical contexts, particularly in the national studies. Tensions are seen, for example, between the aims of promoting active critical citizenship and those of ensuring a cohesive and loyal populace (Morris & Cogan 2001). Concerns about the marginalisation of particular groups through universalist conceptions of citizenship are substantiated in studies such as Fox (2001). Fears of indoctrination are also raised in Westheimer and Kahne (2000).

Yet some of the school level studies show the distance between normative ideals and the reality of implementation. Various factors emerge as influences on implementation that are not always acknowledged in the normative debates:

1. The understandings and dispositions of teachers
2. Differing school contexts (e.g. socio-economic background of pupils, ethos etc.)
3. Pressures from non-(or anti-) citizenship elements in curriculum
4. Tensions between curriculum content promoting democracy and anti-democratic structures and relations in the school (and society)

## The evaluative literature

A section of the literature on EFC is concerned with evaluating interventions, assessing the effects, the influence or the success of particular initiatives. Many of these studies focus on the element of political participation, particularly those aspects which are more amenable to measurement. One of the problems with research in relation to citizenship is that some valued aspects, such as deliberation, respect for difference and positive identity are hard to evaluate. Much of the evaluative research falls within the discipline of political science and sees education as one of a number of relevant variables, rather than something of intrinsic interest. The studies are quantitative almost in their entirety, and aim to achieve a very wide coverage of respondents.

The area is dominated by US researchers (and much of it conducted in the USA) and consequently takes as its norm the forms of political participation common in that country.

A large part of the political science literature aims to determine the effects brought about by educational level in general, rather than specific citizenship education initiatives. Almond and Verba's (1963) seminal study, *The Civic Culture*, for example, found education to be the most important of all demographic variables in determining political attitudes. This and other studies (e.g. Huntington & Nelson 1976; Milbrath & Goel 1965; Goel 1975; Parsons & Bynner 2002) show convincingly that education has a significant effect on different forms of political participation, such as voting, campaigning and membership of organisations. These quantitative studies as a general rule control for background socio-economic variables and therefore show that there is something in formal education itself that enhances political participation. However, they do not shed light on the particular aspects of schooling or forms of education that are influential in this respect. The studies do not separate the elements of environments of discussion and debate, access to multiple perspectives on current affairs and so forth.

Other studies, however, focus directly on citizenship education. One of the motivations of this type of research is explained by Finkel (2002: 995):

[T]he results can shed light on the extent to which democratic values and behaviours are affected by short-term experiential factors, as opposed to the more traditional view that changes in democratic orientations are likely to occur slowly due to long-term economic modernization, generational changes, the activities of political parties and governmental actors, and the gradual diffusion of democratic norms through the international mass media.

The most ambitious recent research project in this area is the IEA Civic Education Study (Torney-Purta et al. 2001), which surveyed nearly 90,000 14-year-olds in 28 (mainly European) countries to determine their civic knowledge and engagement<sup>6</sup>. The survey included a test of civic knowledge as well as questions designed to determine political opinions and attitudes. Across all of the countries, the factor most strongly linked to civic knowledge was the expectation of further education (a variable which reflects aspirations and therefore has a strong socio-economic component). Home literacy resources (measured by the amount of books at home) was the second

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<sup>6</sup> The 24 country study – Torney-Purta et al. 1999 – referred to above, was the initial phase to this project.

strongest predictor, followed by students' perceptions of having an open climate for discussion in their classrooms. The third of these is perhaps the most interesting, since it involves school practice and is not associated with socio-economic level.

The study also assessed the relationship between these variables and the likelihood to vote of the students. The strongest predictor of intentions to vote was civic knowledge itself, followed by having learnt about the importance of voting in school, watching TV news and participating in a school council. While the study does not provide evaluations of the effect of civic education programmes in each of the countries, these results give a strong indication that particular approaches to education (i.e. an open climate for discussion and participation in school councils), and citizenship education as a whole, have a positive effect on future participation. This study could not, however, determine the actual participation of the respondents.

Like many studies of the attitudes of young people, the IEA study provides only tentative indications of the influence of EFC. John and Osborn (1992) also assess the political attitudes of 15-year-olds in two schools in England, one with a 'traditional' and one with a 'democratic' ethos. The study shows significant differences of attitude in certain areas (e.g. being favourable to gender and racial equality), suggesting that ethos does have an influence on citizenship values. Nevertheless, the authors recognise that the scope of the study is too limited to provide convincing results.

A different form of study, assessing knowledge as well as attitudes, is provided by Chaffee et al. (1998), who present a positive account of the possibilities of citizenship education in their evaluation of the 'Newspaper-in-Schools' initiative in Argentina. The project, started in 1986, used free copies of local and national newspapers to promote democratic norms through political discussion in primary and secondary schools. The fact that only some schools volunteered to implement this project made possible a quasi-experimental design in which there were programme and control groups. While the programme group did not show a significant increase in political knowledge, other significant differences between two groups were found, as the study concludes:

Our results discredit some common notions about civics education and political culture. It appears that curriculum interventions can be instrumental in enhancing political literacy among pre-teens, despite considerable prior findings that suggest the



contrary. The Newspaper-in-Schools programme helped students develop political communication habits, and stimulated the forming and voicing of personal opinions. It also fostered interest in political participation, pluralistic orientations, and support for democracy. (p.167)

Importantly, exposure to newspapers was only effective when combined with other activities such as group debate and writing assignments. Another important element is that the study found a closing of the 'knowledge gap', the distance between those from higher and lower social strata.

Project Citizen is an initiative developed by the US Centre for Civic Education, "designed to encourage civic development among adolescent students through intensive study of a school or a community issue" (Liou 2004: 65-66). Liou's (2004) study on the project in Taiwan found significant effects on student skills and dispositions, but not on propensity to participate in future political life and sense of political efficacy. Two factors linked here to the successful development of civic skills and dispositions were an open classroom climate allowing interaction in the learning process, and exposure to news in various media.

However, a number of studies paint a less optimistic picture of the influence of citizenship education. McAllister (1998) argues, with reference to Australia, that it is the total experience of education that contributes to political participation, and that specific civics courses add little. The author relates political knowledge to three other variables: political literacy (measured by correct identification of the local MP); political competence ("the ability to participate in the political process, and to feel that such participation would make a difference to political outcomes"); and political participation<sup>7</sup> (political discussion, campaign activity etc.). The politically knowledgeable person was more likely to be politically *literate*, and increases in knowledge did bring increases in competence up to a certain point, after which further increases brought negligible effect. The influence on participation, however, was small. The author concludes that civic education programmes aiming to increase political knowledge add little to the general effect of the curriculum. However, the findings here are not conclusive since the author acknowledges that in the study it was impossible to separate the respondents that had experienced civic education from those who had not.

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<sup>7</sup> Since voting is obligatory in Australia, voter turnout cannot be used as a meaningful measure of political participation. The same is true for Brazil.

Niemi and Junn (1998) acknowledge that much previous research since the 1960s has shown that civics classes make little difference to knowledge of politics, despite the undeniable influence of education in general. Yet their research presents rather different results. Focusing specifically on political knowledge (rather than political attitudes or actions), they found that those who had attended a civics course had a 4% advantage over those who had not, after controlling for other factors. This is a significant finding, given that only the factors of having interest in governmental affairs and plans to attend university (to a large extent a proxy for socio-economic level) were stronger predictors. Other elements with a positive influence on the results were studying a wide variety of topics in the curriculum in general, engaging in frequent discussions of current affairs and participation in mock elections and the like. In this case, however, the 'knowledge gap' was seen to increase, with minority ethnic groups and females having consistently lower scores, and with the curricular elements having a weaker effect on their results.

Lastly, the EPPI-Centre in the UK has made two reviews of citizenship education. The first, *A systematic review of the impact of citizenship education on the provision of schooling* (Deakin Crick et al. 2004), on the basis of 14 studies, draws a number of conclusions relating to policy and practice: principal among these are the need for a coherent whole-school policy and the importance of dialogue and participatory pedagogies. The review, however, acknowledges that there is a gap in empirical research as regards the implementation at school level. The second, *A systematic review of the impact of citizenship education on student learning and achievement* (Deakin Crick et al. 2005), concludes that existing studies (mainly from the USA) show a significant effect of citizenship education, and in particular learner-centred pedagogies, on the cognitive abilities of students. However, this review does not concern itself with the development of abilities relating specifically to citizenship, such as deliberation skills or political knowledge.

## Possibilities and pitfalls of empirical research on education and citizenship

An important finding in the evaluative studies is that pedagogical forms and practices (e.g. an open interactive classroom, participatory structures etc.) are consistently linked to increases in civic qualities. However, taken as a whole, these studies are inconsistent in their assessment of the influence of citizenship education interventions. They differ in the effects observed on knowledge, skills and attitudes. It is unclear whether this is the result of difference in the civic education programmes themselves, or of differences in the approach of the researchers, the

research design and the conceptual frameworks. In some cases, there is seen to be a significant influence on political knowledge, skills and attitudes, but the link to meaningful political participation is hard to establish. In part, this is due to the methodological problems in measuring participation and relating it to previous school experience.

Evaluations, of any sort, can be problematic from two perspectives. Firstly, they may gauge effectiveness against criteria that are not made explicit, and which may (unknownst to the researcher) be different from the criteria internal to the initiative. Secondly, the proxies for citizenship (i.e. forms of political activity) may provide a restrictive or one-sided picture. The truth is that gauging the effects of education on citizenship by any means is extremely complex. It is both difficult to determine what is to be evaluated (i.e. what 'citizenship' is) and to separate the educational intervention from other causes.

In particular, there are limits to the extent to which quantitative studies can provide a full picture of the relation between education and citizenship, or even education and political participation. One concern about these positivist quantitative studies is that they can present a misleading consensus around citizenship. Project Citizen, for example, is based on an understanding of valued citizen action as single issue politics, often in the local community (Liou 2004). This can be seen as a fragmented conception of political participation, making difficult widespread, unified action to uphold universal rights and seeing existing social, economic and political structures as essentially just, in need of localised adjustments but not upheaval or radical reform<sup>8</sup>.

Yet even setting aside the ideological orientations, there is a more basic problem with the studies, concerning the proxies used for measuring political participation. For obvious reasons, quantifiable variables must be used, such as frequency of contacting a local official, while the qualitative aspects, such as the nature of the communication, its intensity and effectiveness, are rarely included. Complex aspects of political participation are reduced to overly simple proxies: for example, in the McAllister (1998) study, a single indicator, knowledge of the name of the local MP, is used to gauge political literacy. Yet it is clearly possible for people to be politically literate in a number of ways without knowing the name of their MP, and equally, to be familiar with the name of a prominent local politician while having little idea of his or her role or significance. A similar critique could be made of McAllister's proxies for political competence,

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<sup>8</sup> Liou (2004) sees this approach as positive in counteracting the excessively consensual nature of Taiwanese society.

measured by two questions: firstly, “whether the respondents considered political parties important in making the system work”, and secondly, “whether or not respondents thought it mattered for whom they voted” (p. 18). It is hard to see how responses to these questions can ever provide an indication of competence to participate in the political process.

The following, therefore, appear to be the main limitations of quantitative research on education and political participation:

1. Political participation is hard to measure numerically
2. Proxies for participation used in surveys are problematic
3. There is difficulty separating out the different variables influencing participation
4. What constitutes valued or effective political participation is strongly contested
5. The studies are often decontextualised

The complexities of the inputs (education) and the outputs (the myriad forms of political participation) mean that quantitative studies, while broad in terms of respondents, are necessarily shallow in their approach to the question. There is good reason to believe that many of the factors are context bound, and that universal generalisations of the effects of education cannot be made. In addition, there are certain ‘artistic’ elements of teaching and the curriculum that cannot be measured quantitatively: much of the influence of education depends on the immeasurable quality of relationship between teacher and student. In-depth qualitative research is better equipped to address these issues. This is not to say that quantitative research is redundant: in a number of cases, it is important to establish the wider impact of different variables. Nevertheless, it must be read in conjunction with in-depth qualitative research that can bring out the complexities and particularities. A qualitative approach has been adopted in this thesis for this purpose.

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This review has aimed show the richness of the debates surrounding citizenship and education and the wide range of literature on the subject. There are, however, limitations in the ways the literature relates to the practice, with normative studies and national level empirical studies insufficiently attentive to the complexities of implementation, and evaluations often with a

simplistic view of aims. This thesis aims to explore these issues empirically through qualitative research. The following chapter will discuss the methodological bases of this research.



## Chapter 3

### Researching citizenship learning: enquiry in context

There are some parallels between the educational phenomena being studied in this thesis and the process of research itself. In education, like research, the methods are supposed to follow logically from the aims. Yet in reality, the relationship is less straightforward. Sometimes methods recommend themselves on pragmatic grounds or on the basis of custom or tradition; often the relationship between ends and means is one of bidirectional influence. Yet a characteristic of academic research is that (unlike much educational practice) justifications must be given for the methods adopted. This chapter will describe the methodological approach adopted in the study, and, as far as is possible, give reasons for the choices made.

An initial feature of this thesis is that it combines approaches associated with two disciplines – philosophy and sociology – that rarely see eye to eye. While from a philosophical perspective sociology can appear conceptually imprecise, from sociological one, philosophy can seem conservative, detached and lacking in context. My own view is that both of these disciplines are essential for understanding human phenomena. The deep conceptual thought associated with philosophy (both in its more adventurous speculative forms and in the dryer analytical ones) is complemented by the contextual awareness and empirical grounding of sociology. One way in which philosophical discussions need to be grounded is that, having established an ideal normative model, it is necessary to assess the feasibility of such a frame in the world as it currently is. The fact that the world *is* a particular way does not invalidate the desirability of a normative ideal, but it does show the possibilities for positive change at the current time (and all normative ideals desire changes in the world in accordance with their principles).

The main part of the thesis involves empirical research, the collection of data on specific contexts, and analysis of that data. It is hoped that philosophical and sociological approaches will complement one another: the former providing conceptual clarity and a spirit of questioning, and the latter providing awareness of context and an understanding of human behaviour and society in practice.

The empirical research is primarily qualitative in nature. The aim of the study is not to provide an overview of a large range of initiatives and actors, but to develop a deep understanding of a small number of cases. Some of the limitations of quantitative study of citizenship education were outlined in the previous chapter: while they are effective in establishing statistical relations between particular interventions and particular effects, they are unavoidably superficial in terms of their understandings of both the former and the latter. This study aims to explore in greater depth the multiple meanings given to citizenship and the equally complex forms that educational initiatives based on them take.

The methodological choices made here reflect my own epistemological and political assumptions and beliefs. Cohen et al. (2000) distinguish between three principal paradigms of research: positivist, interpretative and critical. The latter two of these are most prominent in this thesis. As in critical theory, there is an explicitly political orientation, in that research is seen to be a means of responding to injustices in the world and contributing to the creation of a fairer one. It is hard to sustain that any research is free from political orientations. All research stems from motivations in the researcher that are coloured with understandings of society (both in terms of how it is and how it ought to be), and has effects on its readership that, whether in minute or significant ways, have an influence on society's development. This thesis is based on an understanding that, even in the case of formal political equality, many groups and individuals are marginalised from effective political power. Universal political participation (or rather the *capability* for participation) is considered a good, both in terms of individual development and societal well-being.

The interpretative paradigm is also relevant here since much of the research aims to determine the understandings of the particular actors involved. But at the same time, there is a certain ambivalence (or perhaps, in more flattering terms, dialectic) between subjectivity and objectivity. This thesis is not based in ontological idealism: while it may be hard to have certain knowledge of the truth, and even harder to communicate to and persuade others of it, the possibility remains for there to exist a state of reality which cannot be reduced to inter-locking subjectivities.

## Validity

Discussions on validity are often clouded by a conceptual confusion between two distinct meanings of the term. The first (which might be called *correspondence*) refers to the extent to which the study relates to reality. The second (which might be called *worthwhileness*) refers to the uses to which the study can be put. A similar idea is commonly expressed in the terms *internal* and *external* validity (Cohen et al. 2000, Robson 1993), yet external validity refers to generalisability to a population, and this is just part of what might comprise worthwhileness. The many different terms associated with validity can be seen to refer to one or other of its meanings: for example, content, construct and ecological validity refer to correspondence, while catalytic validity refers to worthwhileness. Positivist forms of research focus more on correspondence, critical theory focuses more on worthwhileness, while interpretive research has a tentative relationship with both.

However, both correspondence and worthwhileness are essential requirements of any research, whatever its nature. Of course, understandings of both will differ enormously between studies, depending on ontological and epistemological bases. With a view of reality as objective and fixed, correspondence will involve approximation to that truth, while in a subjectivist frame it will consist of providing as authentic an account as possible of subjects' perspectives. In a positivist framework, worthwhileness can simply be a contribution to the development of science, whilst in a feminist framework, it will require some form of social transformation. As stated above, the ontological and epistemological framework within which this study is carried out is one which does not discount the possibility of objective reality, but concedes that it is highly difficult to know, and not possible to be fully understood by positivist scientific method. In terms of worthwhileness, this study is based on the desirability of radical participatory democracy, free from both authoritarianism and neo-liberal consumerism. The study is intended, therefore, to provide an account of reality that both leads to insight into the nature of reality and contributes to bringing about a more desirable society along the lines outlined above.

Kvale (1996) states that there are two ways of establishing the reliability (or control) of interview analysis: multiple interpreters and the explication of procedures. Since there is a single researcher in this project, some explication of procedures is necessary to show validity. This involves the researcher 'laying his or her cards on the table', both in terms of beliefs and attitudes, and also in



terms of the procedure of analysis. This point is explained well by Giorgi (1975: 96, quoted in Kvale 1996: 209):

Thus the chief point to be remembered with this type of research is not so much whether another position with respect to the data can be adopted (this point is granted beforehand), but whether a reader, adopting the same viewpoints as articulated by the researcher, can also see what the researchers saw, whether or not he agrees with it.

Cohen et al. (2000) assert that validity must be present in all four stages of the research process: design, data gathering, data analysis and data reporting. There are dangers of invalidity at each of these stages: in the design, choosing the appropriate methodology and research instruments; in the data gathering, to avoid researcher influence and reactivity effects; in the analysis, avoiding selective use of data, avoiding making unwarranted inferences and generalisations, and reducing the 'halo' effect (from prior knowledge of persons and situations); and in reporting, avoiding presenting data in an unrepresentative way, and indicating the degree of confidence that can be placed on the results.

This study maintains a broadly Freirean position that political implications are inevitable, yet this does not mean that bias ceases to be an issue. Discussing ideas of teaching in Freire's work, Roberts (1999) makes a distinction between holding a particular view and imposing it on others. In relation to research, researchers will have particular viewpoints which colour their choice of site, the way they collect data and the perspectives with which they view it. Yet there are differing degrees to which those political and moral positions are imposed on the data. An extreme position would involve fabricating data to support a particular position, but there are other more subtle ways in which data can be manipulated or selectively represented so as to falsify the picture available. These forms of bias are undesirable, but avoidable. The more subtle colourings that take place from a researcher's perspective, however, are not avoidable.

One way in which this study aims to ensure validity is through *triangulation*, in which multiple data gathering methods are used to obtain different perspectives on the same issue (these methods are discussed below). In relation to worthwhileness, the aim in this study is that there should be implications of use for contexts outside the three studies here. In fact, this study is not primarily intended to provide findings that will help the three cases in question to improve their practice

(though it may have this result). The extent to which the findings of the studies can be generalised will be discussed in the following section.

### **Case studies**

This thesis aims to explore particular processes in education, particularly the formulation of understandings, the translation of these understandings to pedagogical practices and the implementation of those practices. These are best explored using a case study approach, one which allows a broad understanding of an initiative involving a range of different actors and a number of forms of data collection. There will not be a full *comparison* of the three cases here: the differences of form and reach that the initiatives take means that they are not, strictly speaking, comparable. Nevertheless, their varying approaches will be highlighted as a means of exploring the questions posed in study.

The educational initiatives explored here are “bounded systems” (Stake 1978: 7) in the sense that they have a discrete set of aims and understandings, an organised group of actors who see themselves as part of a common project and sites of implementation associated with the actors and the understandings. This research has more than one such case. Stake (2000) uses the term *collective case study*, for instances in which the “researcher may jointly study a number of cases in order to investigate a phenomenon...” (p.437). These cases, according to Stake, are “chosen because it is believed that understanding them will lead to better understanding, perhaps better theorising, about a still larger collection of cases” (p.437).

The cases selected have both intrinsic and instrumental value. On the one hand, they are all examples of ambitious initiatives aiming to empower politically marginalised groups. The innovative ways in which the initiatives address social exclusion are of interest to people working in other contexts. Brazil, in this way, is also of intrinsic interest: as discussed in the following chapter, it is a country with extreme inequality and political marginalisation, but at the same time with a rich field of educational responses. On the other hand, the cases have instrumental importance. They are sites in which the conceptual debates developed in the first part of the thesis can be explored. For example, the study aims to develop understanding of the constraints in practice on implementing normative approaches designed to enhance political agency. The relevance of this understanding goes beyond the cases in question.

There are different perspectives on the extent to which the findings of case studies can be *generalised*. Clearly, they cannot be the basis of the type of generalisation associated with large-scale inductive studies. Yet, there other ways in which transferable knowledge may be developed. Stake (1978) calls this *naturalistic generalisation*, “arrived at by recognizing the similarities of objects and issues in and out of context and by sensing the natural covariance of happenings” (p.6). These generalisations “seldom take the form of predictions but lead regularly to expectation”. Unlike *positivist* generalisation, which makes claims about the population from which the case is taken, *naturalistic* generalisation enhances our understanding of other individual cases whether or not they are typical, or indeed similar to the original case.

Cases can be sites for the development of theory. Firstly, existing theories can be tested within the case. While these cannot be definitively confirmed, supporting evidence can be gathered, and they can be called into question and possibly falsified. Perhaps more importantly, however, case studies are important sites for the generation of new theory. The intense and sustained exploration of a particular instance can provide rare insight into phenomena. Hammersley et al. (2000) identify two ways in which case studies can develop theory. Firstly, using a single case, insight can be developed into causal relations, linking inputs and outputs in a system. The authors, however, are sceptical about the possibilities of this form since “explanations rely on assumptions about general causal relationships which cannot be validated solely through the study of a single case” (p. 242). Instead, they advocate a *comparative method* in which “data be available from more than one case, perhaps from a substantial number, such that the effects of various candidate causal factors can be controlled or assessed” (p. 242).

As stated above, the choice of the three cases studied here had both intrinsic and instrumental grounds (with some pragmatic considerations as well). The MST and the municipal government of Belo Horizonte, in their different ways, are well-known in Brazil and beyond for their educational work, as part of the movement for radical democracy growing out of the dictatorship (e.g. Diniz-Pereira 2005; Hypólito 2004). Being a very new project, Voter of the Future (VF) does not have the renown that would merit this type of attention, but it is intrinsically interesting in terms of its novelty. Yet the cases were also chosen due to distinctive properties that might illuminate different aspects of the research questions. Firstly, they are promoted by different types of body: the MST is a social movement, the Plural School (PS) is run by a local government and VF by the Regional Electoral Tribunals (TREs). These differences enable certain questions of the

nature of the promoting body to be explored. Secondly, the three cases have distinct political and pedagogical orientations. In very crude terms (these distinctions will be explored in greater detail in chapter 5) the three represent examples of socialist (MST), progressive-constructivist (PS) and liberal democratic (VF) approaches to education and citizenship. The variety of orientations enables conceptual issues to be explored.

There are also pragmatic considerations. Initially, instead of Belo Horizonte, the second case was to be the municipality of Pelotas, in Rio Grande do Sul, subject of a shorter study in 2004 (McCowan 2004b; 2006a). However, the party in power lost the municipal elections of October 2004, meaning that the education policies of interest were discarded, along with most of the staff of the Education Secretariat. Acquaintances at the Federal University of Minas Gerais in Belo Horizonte recommended that I study instead the municipal government of the same city, and provided me with some important contacts there. Without these, it would have been much more difficult to obtain access to the schools. In the case of the MST, the research was significantly facilitated by the fact that I had conducted a previous study in 2002 (McCowan 2002; 2003), and had maintained contact with the movement in the intervening years. Access to the MST is particularly difficult, given the severe threats to its members by land owners, and the frequent occurrence of distorting negative portrayals of the movement in the press. These previous contacts allowed me to have access to MST schools and headquarters. While I did not have previous contact with the VF programme, the various co-ordinators I contacted were enthusiastic about the possibility of my carrying out research there, and this made the choice more attractive.

In addition to the programmes, in the cases of the MST and VF, which have a national presence, decisions had to be made about the location. In the case the MST, the state of Rio Grande do Sul was chosen as it has the longest tradition of movement activity and some of the most developed and innovative examples of educational work. In the case of Voter of the Future, there was less evidence available for the choice. In this case I made visits to those states in which, from the information provided in the websites, the initiative appeared to be most energetically implemented. From the four visited in 2005, one state in the Northern region of the country ('Yanomía') was chosen for in-depth research in 2006. This state, and the others referred to, will remain anonymous, as given the small size of the programme, it would otherwise be impossible to maintain the anonymity of the individual participants and schools. There are also some references to data collected in another state ('Seconia') in the Central-West of the country.

Decisions also had to be made about the individual schools researched. In this, however, there was very little choice, since access to schools was dependent on the consent and indication of the organisers of the initiative in each case. Understandably, the co-ordinators had an interest in directing me to those schools which best displayed successful implementation of the initiative. In fact, while giving a skewed picture of the implementation of the project overall, this was not a major problem, since the interest in this study was actually to see ‘good’ examples of the initiative. In 2005, research was undertaken in three schools of the MST, three schools of the PS and five of VF. In 2006, this was narrowed down to two focus schools in the cases of the MST and PS. A greater number of focus schools was used in VF due to the smaller number of participants involved in the project in each school, and the more superficial nature of implementation overall. The names of the schools are listed in the table below, and further details are provided in Appendix 1.

#### Focus schools

<i>Initiative</i>	<i>Names of schools</i>
MST	Salinas Treviso
Plural School	Barroso Cantagalo Bandeirante <sup>9</sup>
Voter of the Future	Caymmi Amazonas Minas Morães Viola

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<sup>9</sup> A third school of the Plural School in which research was carried out in 2005 is also referred to in the analysis.

## Collecting data

Qualitative research, according to Denzin and Lincoln (2000), is characterised by use of multiple methods. In the absence of positivist criteria of validity, it is necessary to triangulate, or, in Richardson's (2000) metaphor, hold up a crystal to the research site to reveal its multi-faceted reality. In fact, triangulation has its purpose both from an epistemologically relativist position – in which different understandings must be teased out – and from a position that accepts the existence of objective reality, but sees that multiple views are needed to capture it.

The triangulation in this study involves three forms of data: documents, interviews and observations. In general terms, the documents provide a picture of the official aims of the initiatives and the ideal means of implementing them. The interviews to some extent reflect these, but also provide personal interpretations of aims and reflections on the experience in practice and its consequences. The observations provide the researcher's perspective on the implementation of the initiatives and their effects on students. These three perspectives allow for an analysis of both the stated and actual curricula, and of outside and inside perspectives.

On account of the differences between the three initiatives, different types of documentation were collected in each case. As stated above, the intention was not to provide a strict comparison: they were treated as three separate case studies, and thus forms of data collection were different in each case. In the case of the MST, the documents consisted firstly of the booklets produced by the movement at the national level to orient their educational activities. Of these there are two main series: *cadernos da educação* (education booklets) and *boletins da educação* (education bulletins). In addition, documentation was collected from the individual schools, most importantly the politico-pedagogical plans (PPPs), but also the 'plan of studies', a more detailed and concrete elaboration of the PPP, and the *regimento*, a legal document outlining the rules and norms governing the school and its members. A key document in the PS was the large booklet produced after the 2nd Municipal Seminar in 1994 that lays out the principles of the programme. In addition, school documentation similar to that of the MST was also collected. The only central document found in VF was its nationally distributed booklet, *Learning to be a Citizen*. Each state, however, had some documentation of its own, although this was not extensive in any instance, and often reproduced parts of the national booklet. A number of studies (e.g. Davies & Issitt 2005; Fox 2003) focus on textbooks for their studies of citizenship education. This is not appropriate in the Brazilian context since textbooks are not universally used in classrooms, and

there is rarely a coherent policy on them. A list of the unpublished documents referred to in the text is provided in Appendix 6.

One element common to all three initiatives is that interviews were carried out with three types of respondents: co-ordinators, teachers and students. These three types of respondent were chosen in order to give varied perspectives on the educational process: the more 'official' line from the co-ordinators, and views 'on the ground' from the contrasting perspectives of teachers and their pupils. The nature of the co-ordinators differed from initiative to initiative: in the case of the PS these were staff of the Municipal Secretariat of Education (SMED); in the case of the MST they were co-ordinators of education at the state level; and in the case of VF they were either administrative staff in the TREs or in one case an electoral judge. In each focus school, headteachers (and in some cases deputies) as well as three class teachers were interviewed. Students were primarily taken from the classes that had been observed (discussed below) although in some cases other students of different ages were interviewed. In most cases, three groups at each focus school were interviewed. In the case of VF, interviews were also carried out with the three winners of an essay writing competition held in 2006. The details of all the interviews referred to in the text are listed in Appendix 2.

There are different ways of classifying types of interview. A central distinction is between different levels of *structure*: between those types where the interview follows a strict pre-planned course, and those in which the progression of the interview depends on the responses of the interviewee (Cohen et al. 2000; Denscombe 1998). The interviews conducted in this study were *semi-structured*, in that they were based on a broad plan of the items to be covered, but with no obligation to stick rigidly to the order or the phrasing of questions. The items were adapted for each respondent, although a number of elements were common to all in a particular initiative, and a few aspects, such as conceptions of citizenship, were common to all three initiatives. The progression of each interview varied in relation to the responses given, and to the areas of interest that the researcher or the respondent wished to pursue. The questions were intended to be as *undirective* as possible, allowing the respondents to construct their views and conceptions according to their own understanding and using their own terminology. Nevertheless, the interviews were not *unstructured*, as there were specific areas that needed to be covered (such as views on implementation), and particular concepts to be explored (such as 'citizenship' and 'participation'). An example of an interview outline can be seen in Appendix 3.

Interviews were conducted in Portuguese without an interpreter, and lasted from 20-60 minutes (interviews were generally shorter with students). The number of interviewees varied: teachers and co-ordinators were usually interviewed individually. However, with students there were usually two or more at a time, and in one case as many as six. This was in order to make the younger interviewees feel more secure: an individual interview may have been overwhelming, and it was observed that they spoke more freely in numbers. The interviews were recorded on mini-cassette for later transcription, and some hand-written notes were also taken (See Appendix 4 for an example of an original interview transcript, and its English translation). Of the 83 interviews conducted in total, 39 of these – those considered to be of most relevance to the themes chosen for study – were transcribed for closer analysis.

Difficulties in conducting interviews stemmed principally from the time constraints on teachers. Many are employed for two or three 'shifts' a day, leaving them very little time free, so, despite their almost universal willingness to help, scheduling times to meet was at times problematic. Organising interviews with co-ordinators and headteachers was easier on account of their greater flexibility of timetable. Students were often taken out of class for their interviews, raising some ethical issues in terms of disruption of their studies (although often to the delight of the students themselves!).

While efforts were made not to lead the respondents towards particular conceptualisations, terminology and views, there was inevitably some degree of researcher influence in the collection of data. My being a foreign university-based researcher would have had a significant influence on the responses given, although this may have been tempered by my being fluent in Portuguese and having spent a long time in the country, thus reducing the 'distance' to some degree. More subtle influences may have resulted from other features of my identity, such as my age (early thirties), being white and male. The fact that I was generally sympathetic to the aims of the three initiatives would also have had an effect on the data gathered. In the case of the MST, while I had not met any of the respondents before, my prior knowledge of the movement in other parts of the country would also have been influential.

One problem in terms of validity arose in the case of the MST, due to the movement's wariness of researchers. Less than a year before my arrival, a highly critical article entitled 'Madrassahs of the MST' had been published in the well-known magazine *Veja*, alleging that the schools were brainwashing camps. The journalists in question had conducted interviews at one of the schools



used in the study, Salinas. While the co-ordinators did not discourage me from carrying out research there, and the school staff were willing to participate, it is likely that in some cases there was a reluctance to emphasise the political aspects of MST education, or any other aspect that might be interpreted as indoctrination. The same is true of the interviews with state co-ordinators in Porto Alegre.

Such obvious constraints were not evident in the case of the other two initiatives, though there were other factors that may have influenced responses. In the case of VF, coordinators and teachers on the whole had a strong incentive to 'sell' the initiative, and particularly to paint a positive picture of Yanomia to the outside world. In this case, inconsistencies between coordinators' accounts and those of students and less-involved teachers were revealing. In the case of PS, teachers appeared to feel little institutional pressure to praise the initiative, given the frankness of their comments. My being an external researcher – rather than one based at the local university or from the SMED – in this instance may have been an advantage, allowing respondents to speak more freely.

The third form of data consists of observations carried out in classrooms. This form of data collection relates primarily to the MST and the PS: in the case of VF, which does not manifest itself on a daily basis within the classroom, these observations were more difficult, and took on different forms such as occasional lectures and debates. In the case of the former two, in the absence of discrete citizenship education classes, it was necessary to observe a wide variety of classes, to gain a broad perspective. In some cases I was directed towards particular subjects such as sociology, geography and history, in which citizenship was seen to be more prominent. Certainly, the content aspect of political related themes was more prominent in these classes. However, other important pedagogical influences on the development of citizenship were observed in other classes as well. The choice of classes was often dependent on pragmatic considerations, such as whether teachers were present in the school and were willing to have a researcher in the class.

Observations are customarily categorised into *participant* and *non-participant* (Cohen et al. 2000). While positivist research requires a detached objective observer, much qualitative research relies on the researcher being an active member of the group. This study involves what might be called semi-participant observations. On the one hand, the students and teacher were fully aware of my presence in the classroom, attention was often drawn to it and I occasionally participated in

an activity. Yet I was not a participant in the sense of being a student in class, and I was clearly conceived of as *other*, a visitor or researcher. It was a fairly frequent occurrence that one of the students sitting close to me would ask me questions, usually about life in the UK. While I was wary of allowing these discussions to disturb the rest of the class and cause me to miss other occurrences, I always answered them and occasionally conversations developed. On a few occasions, teachers asked me to come up to the front of the class and answer student questions directly, or posed their own questions. The teacher Roger, for example, on one occasion asked me to tell the class what view Europeans had of Latin America. My presence, therefore, was undeniably an influence, and at times seemed to cause a worrying degree of disturbance, yet after the initial interest had died down, classes would return to something resembling their ordinary course. Only on one occasion was a special class put on for my benefit (in the case of an MST school where a ritual performance was staged instead of the normal class).

Distinctions are also drawn between *structured* and *unstructured* observations, ranging from tick box observations every 10 seconds, to a blank sheet of paper with no preconceived categories (Cohen et al. 2007). In this study, some structure guided the observations, but within that there was room for the development of new ideas and recording of unexpected material. Notes were taken of the classes, written during the class itself (see Appendix 5). My own personal reflections and thoughts were enclosed in square brackets to distinguish them from my narrative of the events underway in the class. These reflections predominantly consisted of immediate analyses of events, but also included reference to personal feelings and experiences. The observations were organised around two key elements of interest:

#### *Content*

- Specific references to political issues and institutions, current affairs, human rights etc.
- Indirect treatment of political issues, moral and political values, citizenship etc.
- Degree of openness or rigidity of knowledge and values presented

#### *Delivery*

- Types of activity used
- Teaching styles: chalk and talk, participatory methods, group work etc.
- Layout of classroom

- Teacher-student relationship

The original intention was to focus exclusively on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades of primary<sup>10</sup> school (ideally corresponding to ages 13 and 14, although, due to repetition, including a number of older students). However, it was decided to expand the scope to include the first years of secondary<sup>11</sup> school as well, for the following reasons. Firstly, there were sometimes practical difficulties with observing the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes. Secondly, there were instances in which aspects of interest to the study – such as the *grêmios* (pupil associations) and practices of inclusion for those with special needs – were only evident in different years. Lastly, a number of schools had primary and secondary provision on the same site, with very little distinction between them. Since strict comparability between the three cases was not required, some flexibility in this area was allowed. The study, therefore, stretched to the 11-18 age group, although the vast majority of the student participants were aged 13-17. One observation was also carried out of an adult education class of the MST, but this data was not included in the analysis. It is important to note that this study assesses the educational experience of *students* in schools; while teachers, co-ordinators and community members have their own trajectories of development, the thesis will principally assess their role in designing and implementing the programmes.

In addition to these three forms of data, other information and impressions were gathered. One important source of this less formal material was conversations held with numerous teachers, administrative staff and others, answering my questions about particular points of fact as well as giving general opinions and perspectives. I spent a good deal of time in staff rooms, and observed teacher interaction there. My relations with staff were in general very good, although on a few occasions, particularly in Barroso School, the reception was a little unenthusiastic (perhaps the teachers were resentful at having someone ‘evaluating’ them - as was seen in the study conducted by Dalben 2000a). I also made informal observations of corridor displays, classroom layouts, classroom wall displays and the school buildings in general, which sometimes provided important insights into the ethos of the school. Information gathered in this way was recorded in the form of field notes.

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<sup>10</sup> Primary school (*ensino fundamental*) in Brazil is eight years in duration, corresponding officially to the 7-14 age group.

<sup>11</sup> Secondary school (*ensino médio*) is three years in duration, corresponding officially to a 15-17 age group.

The research setting differed significantly in the three cases. The MST schools were in rural areas, and in the case of Treviso School, in a very remote location. The only sounds that could be heard outside the school were those of animals and the occasional farm vehicle. The contrast with Barroso School could not have been greater, where it was often impossible to hear what the teacher said on account of the traffic noise outside. The schools in Belo Horizonte were generally loud and busy, with large classes, while those of the MST were small and quiet, reflecting the tranquil and sparsely populated communities surrounding them. The site of the VF programme in Yanomia, while being a state capital, differed strongly from Belo Horizonte in its tropical climate, and in being a smaller and more dispersed city. Temperatures rarely dipped below 30°, and the presence of nature was always felt, with the small patch of urbanisation surrounded on one side by the river and on the other by vast expanses of rainforest.

### **Analysing data**

Mason (2002) distinguishes between three ways of reading data: literally, interpretively and reflexively. The first refers to a literal version of “what is there”, including “the words and language used, the sequence of interaction, the form and structure of the dialogue, and the literal content” (p.149). An interpretive reading, in contrast “will involve you in constructing or documenting a version of what you think the data mean or represent, or what you think you can infer from them”, requiring a “*reading through or beyond* the data in some way (original emphasis). Lastly, “a reflexive reading will locate you [the researcher] as part of the data you have generated, and will seek to explore your role and perspective in the process of generation and interpretation of data”.

In analysing the data generated in this study, I was concerned with all three of these levels, although not in equal depth. On the literal level, I did not attempt to analyse the *form* of the interview text. For example, there was no attempt at a linguistic discourse analysis or conversation analysis, looking at sequences, interaction and use of words, nor a quantitative content analysis, in which inferences are made on the basis of the frequency of appearance of words or other linguistic phenomena. Nevertheless, I was concerned with the words and phrases people used. For example, the use of the gender sensitive “professores e professoras” (including both male and female teachers) indicates a particular attitude towards gender issues. In the

interviews, the respondents' choosing to speak about particular topics, to recall particular events or to highlight particular elements of citizenship was clearly significant.

This analysis did not have the technical rigour of a hermeneutical approach, nor its emphasis on the literary nature of the text or on interpretative consensus (Kvale, 1996: 47). Some aspects of phenomenology are present: for example, there is an intention to present the perspective of the respondents as faithfully as possible, rather than slipping back into pre-ordained, unchallenged notions (Patton, 2002). Yet obtaining an untainted view of the perspectives of the respondents is not the sole aim of the study, and such depth of analysis is not always possible, since understandings of the initiative's aims and implementation are to be gathered from a relatively wide range of sources. Finally, in terms of reflective readings, the analysis is underpinned by an awareness of the researcher's presence, identity, intellectual concerns and beliefs. Yet there is not sustained attention given to the interaction of researcher and data.

In no case was the data approached without any preconceived categories. The study has a particular agenda of interest, and, as stated above, was not attempting to capture a 'pure' understanding of the participants. However, within the broad categories, space was allowed for the particular conceptions of the respondents to emerge. For example, passages were coded for their relevance to the theme of rights and duties: yet within this, no specific conceptions of rights and duties were taken to the data, allowing notions to emerge from there. Computer software was not used for the analysis, since the size of the data set was of a manageable size for manual analysis, and no significant gains were seen to be made from the use of electronic manipulation.

Different methods of analysis were required for the three forms of data, in line with the conceptualisation outlined in the introduction:

### *Documents*

In analysing the documents, the first distinction is that between understandings of citizenship, and the means of its implementation. Within this there are further categorisations. Understandings of citizenship were analysed in relation to the four areas of tension identified in chapter 2. Means of implementation were analysed in relation to the elements of school activities, teaching methods and institutional structures. The texts were coded according to these different areas, and the

passages relevant to each were juxtaposed for the purpose of analysis. Certain passages – ones which were representative of the various perspectives, or which expressed particular ideas eloquently – were chosen to quote in full. In part, these ideas appear explicitly: for example, a document may state the understanding of rights contained in the initiative. Yet orientations will also emerge implicitly, where the word ‘rights’ may not be used, but significant implications are nonetheless contained in the passage. Passages of text do not always have a single theme, and consequently two or more codes were sometimes necessary.

### *Interviews*

All the interviews used in the analysis were transcribed in Portuguese, with translation to English of terms and quotations only occurring in the write-up of the study. To some extent, interviews (particularly those with co-ordinators) fulfil the same function as documents in presenting official views of an initiative. Yet they go beyond this by presenting personal interpretations of the aims, experiences of its implementation and opinions on its success. The first two categories, therefore, are the same as those used above with the documents, although some distinctions are made between individual and institutional perspectives. However, there are two further categories employed here:

#### Experiences of implementation

- Accounts of the process of implementation
- Personal feelings (e.g. achievement, frustration etc.)
- Understandings of constraints and facilitators of implementation

#### Views on effectiveness

- Effects on students
- Effects on society

One unfruitful part of the interview data was responses to the question of students’ understandings of the words ‘citizen’ and ‘citizenship’ themselves. The responses here were remarkably similar across the three initiatives, despite the strong contrasts between them in other ways. The problem is that people’s expressed view of the ‘citizen’ or ‘citizenship’ often corresponds to how they have heard the terms used, and not their own view of how human beings

as political agents *should* ideally act. When respondents give 'conservative' definitions of citizenship (such as reducing the 'good citizen' to someone who puts rubbish in the bin and obeys the country's laws), it does not necessarily mean that they are conservative in their political views. There was also a strong separation in the students' minds between the notions of 'citizenship' and 'politics', the latter being mainly associated with the self-interested activities of politicians.

### *Observations*

The data gathered from observations is different from that of documents and interviews in that it consists of the voice of the researcher. While interviews are strongly influenced by the researcher, the majority of the text is comprised of the words of the respondent. The documents have the least influence of the researcher in their construction and, unlike interviews in which a written text is created from a conversation, are written texts in their original form. The data from observations is also written text, in the form of the notes taken, yet this is often supplemented by the researcher's memories of the actual event. A researcher looking at her own notes will have a mental image of the actual classroom and perhaps recall events and impressions that are not recorded. Another aspect is that the notes taken contain not only observations of what is happening, but also personal reflections. In my notes, reflections were distinguished from observations by being placed in square brackets.

The observation notes were coded as with the other texts. The following categories were used:

- Knowledge / skills / values intended to be developed
- Activities / pedagogical styles / relationships in evidence

The last issue in relation to data analysis is the status of theory. As stated above, the thesis draws on a philosophical tradition of posing questions to be explored progressively through the study, as well as a sociological tradition of theory generation and testing. Cohen et al. (2007: 491) make a distinction between positivist research, in which "the theory pre-exists its testing, and the researcher deduces from the data whether the theory is robust and can be confirmed", and grounded theory, which, "does not force the data to fit with a predetermined theory" (p.492). 'Curricular transposition', the underlying theoretical frame in the thesis, existed in a skeletal form

prior to the empirical research, and is partially derived from the literature. However, it does not represent a theory to be tested in the data – to be proved or disproved. In its initial form it is rather a structuring scheme. The initial theoretical frame (presented in the introduction) simply proposes the existence of ideals, curricular programmes, implementation and effects in educational undertakings, and these are used to order the discussion of data in the thesis. The points of interest are the relationships between these elements, and these are not predefined, but instead emerge from the data itself.

So this thesis shares grounded theory's principle of allowing theory to be generated from within the data, rather than being imposed on it. However, the thesis does not adopt the techniques of analysis associated with grounded theory (e.g. Charmaz 2006; Glaser & Strauss 1967; Strauss & Corbin 1998), and shares some of the reservations of the approach expressed by Thomas and James (2006: 790), namely that, "To use grounded theory involves a rejection of simple understanding. It entails an explicit denial of what we know and our ways, as practitioners (and as human beings), of making sense". The development of theory in this thesis generally follows a circular pattern of movement to and from the empirical and the theoretical, the real and abstractions, and the perspectives of the data and my own perspectives. A final point is that the theory generated and explored in this thesis is not definitive or conclusive and requires further exploration in other contexts.

On a personal level, some tensions were caused by the relationship between the empirical and the theoretical in the literature. My feelings of comfort in the realm of abstract categorisations and patterns meant that the real contexts of untidy enactments and negotiations in everyday school life were often jarring. This disturbance is ultimately positive in that it forces a revision of overly neat schemes and draws attention to the unexpected workings of human agency.

### **Ethical considerations**

In all cases, pseudonyms have been used for participants and schools, with real names used for the initiatives themselves and, in the cases of the MST and PS, the places in which they occur. For the reasons outlined above, the state in which the VF research was carried out remains anonymous. Participants were informed that I was carrying out research for a PhD in Education. So as not to influence responses, I tried to limit the information about the research to the phrase



'education and citizenship', although in some cases, on the request of the participants, I went into greater detail about my interests. In the case of interviews, I asked the participants if they minded my recording the conversation (there were no objections). Classroom observations were normally organised by headteachers who themselves requested permission of the teachers.

In all three of the cases, there were different levels of organisation to be attended to. First, consent had to be obtained from the co-ordinators at the highest level, given that institutional knowledge of and support for the research was necessary for it to go ahead. Next, headteachers needed to be approached to request permission to carry out research within the school. In addition, a more intimate form of consent was required from all the participants themselves. Within this, children are the most complex case, since consent is required not only from themselves, but also from their guardians or teachers (*in loco parentis*). Most care was required as regards consent in the case of the MST, on account of the security needs of the movement. Threats of spying and undercover journalists make the movement wary of contact with researchers. In this case, it was essential to gain full permission for all contacts with schools and communities.

In contrast to the MST, the representatives of VF were eager to welcome a researcher on account of the publicity gained. This was problematic in a different way, since I was on occasions placed in the role of spokesperson of the initiative, rather than impartial observer. During my time in Yanomia in 2005 and 2006 I was invited to conduct interviews for local radio, television and newspapers. Positive publicity is highly important for the judiciary in general (perhaps in response to characterisations of corruption and privilege), so some tensions were created with my role as independent researcher.

The three research sites responded in different ways to the notion of academic research and to my position as researcher. Participants in the MST and PS were accustomed to being involved in research projects, as a large number of small scale studies are carried out on these initiatives by researchers and research students at a local level. VF did not have this familiarity, and as a consequence my position was more ambiguous. As stated above, I was cast as a publicist in some instances: on one occasion I was introduced as someone who "was going to establish the Voter of the Future programme in the UK", despite having never expressed this intention. There was also a lack of clarity over the difference between academic and journalistic research, and I was declined interviews by officials nervous about making what they thought would be public statements.

My being a *foreign* researcher changed the nature of the relationship again (tempered – as stated above – by my being familiar with the country and language). The expectations of research in a ‘developing country’ context is that there will be a problematic power relationship between the ‘expert’ from the wealthy country and the disempowered ‘subject’ of research (‘subject’ used in the passive rather than the active sense here). In fact, my experience was more ambiguous. For a large proportion of the time, I felt myself positioned as the student, waiting patiently to catch the key participants when they had a free moment from their activities – ones which were more pressing and important than my own research project. At other times, the fact of my being a visitor from another country did accord me some interest and status – again, particularly in VF. In almost all cases, I was received with disarming warmth and attention, all the more remarkable given the pressured schedule of schools and coordination centres. My feelings of discomfort at constantly asking for favours and giving little in return were to some extent allayed by the participants’ enthusiasm to contribute.

Brazil is distinct from some other ‘developing world’ contexts in that it is a country with its own active research culture, and many of the teachers had experience of researching as well as being researched. Brazil also has an unusual status in terms of global development in that it is simultaneously ‘first’ and ‘third’ worlds, with a large proportion of the population having similar standards of living and cultural tastes to those in Europe and North America. This means that the outsider status of a researcher is felt almost as acutely by an urban middle-class Brazilian researcher in an impoverished rural area as it is by one from another country.

Amongst those teachers opposed to US-British neo-imperialism, there were variations in the extent to which I was seen as being a part of it or alternatively an ally in the struggle against it. Once I found myself in an awkward situation as a deputy head in PS quizzed me – and implicitly implicated me – over the mistreatment of Latin-Americans in the UK. I found myself in the strange position of defending British society and government policy (I felt he was mistaken in conflating the very different realities of the USA and UK) while normally I would have been a strong critic of the treatment of migrant groups. On other occasions – as in Roger’s class in Salinas School – I was positioned as an ally in the global movement against imperialist policies.

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This section has aimed to explore and in some cases justify the ways the research was designed and conducted. The methodology developed out of the requirements of the study – in terms of the information to be collected and understandings to be derived – but also, in a number of instances, on the basis of practical requirements in the field. It is an *ad hoc* approach, in that it does not follow a single method – such as content analysis – or a single approach – such as ethnography – although some methodological unity is brought about by the use of case study. The research, however, aims to be valid both in terms of correspondence and worthwhileness, while acknowledging some problems and limitations in the design and implementation.

Before the presentation of the data itself, there will first be a discussion of the Brazilian context in which the three initiatives are located.

## Chapter 4

### The Brazilian Context

This chapter will outline the national context of Brazil, and some of its regional variations, highlighting those aspects of society and the education system of particular relevance to the issues raised in the study. There will then be a closer analysis of the radical democratic educational movement from the 1980s that was a major inspiration for the Plural School and the MST. Finally, there will be an outline of the three initiatives and the ways they respond to elements of the Brazilian political, economic and social context, as well as a summary of existing literature relating to them.

#### **The political, economic and social context of Brazil**

In 2007, Brazil was ranked 10th of all countries on the Gini scale of income inequality (UNDP 2007). While it is far from being a low-income country, with a GNI per capita of \$4,730 (World Bank 2007), the national income is heavily concentrated, with the top 10% of society having a 68 times greater share of wealth than the bottom 10%. This leaves the majority of the population in poverty, with particular hardship suffered in the rural regions of the North-East and the urban shantytowns known as *favelas*.

Historical factors are key to explaining the injustices in the country. The Portuguese colonisation from the start of the 16<sup>th</sup> century divided the vast territory into *captaincies* run by (frequently absent) noblemen, with little effort to encourage independent smallholdings amongst the settlers. The economy was based around exploitation of natural resources and export goods (first timber, then sugar, gold and finally coffee) with few efforts to develop the infrastructure of the country or establish a self-sufficient system. While national industry was encouraged in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the economy is still dependent on agricultural and mineral exports, and there has been little change in the extreme concentration of wealth.

In the colonial period, the indigenous peoples, whose numbers were soon depleted through massacres and newly-introduced diseases, were initially forced to work on the sugar plantations

established along the coastal strip. However, the settlers preferred the use of African slaves, who were brought over in great numbers from the 17<sup>th</sup> century – as many as 3 million in total. In 1888, Brazil became the last country in the Western hemisphere to abolish slavery, and subsequently gave little support to the former slave population in the transition to wage labour. Consequently, Afro-descendants<sup>12</sup> still make up a large proportion of the population of the *favelas* that grew dramatically through the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and have few opportunities in education, health and employment. Later immigrant groups, such as the Italians, Germans and Japanese in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, who settled in the temperate zones of the South and South-East of the country, and who received greater state support on their arrival, have higher standards of living. It is, however, hard to speak of distinct ethnic or racial groups within the country, due to the high levels of inter-racial mixing in evidence since the beginning of the Portuguese colonisation. Official figures show 53.7% of the population to be white, 38.5% of mixed-race, 6.2% black, 0.5% East Asian and 0.4% indigenous (IBGE 2000). However, a large proportion of the population declared ‘white’ have some indigenous or African ancestry. The fluidity of Brazilian racial identity has made issues of racism more complex than, say, in the USA, and a myth of ‘racial democracy’ has long been prevalent in the country, concealing significant inequalities. Currently, the proportion of black and mixed-race Brazilians classified as illiterate is double that of the white population, and the latter’s salaries are on average 40% greater than those of the former, when controlling for qualifications (IBGE 2007).

One important difference between Brazil and a number of other countries in which discussions about citizenship are being carried out (see chapter 2) is the absence in Brazil of recent immigrant groups of significant size. This means that a number of the problematic issues about national identity are not present – Black or indigenous Brazilians may be discriminated against and marginalised in various ways, but it would never be suggested that they were any ‘less Brazilian’ than the rest of the population. Another distinct feature in relation to citizenship is the relative absence of the nationalistic rhetoric and sentiment. While there is evident patriotic feeling, largely focused around sporting events, this rarely takes an exclusive or hostile character. In part this is a reaction against the nationalistic emphasis of the dictatorship years, as well as the lack of obvious military or other threats to the country. Education for citizenship initiatives, for this reason, very rarely emphasise nationalist elements.

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<sup>12</sup> This is the term most commonly used in Brazil, as opposed to ‘African Brazilians’ or ‘Afro-Brazilians’.

Regional factors are also influential in terms of inequalities. The wealthiest region is the South-East, particularly the state of São Paulo, where much of the country's industry is located – although there are pockets of extreme deprivation in urban areas. The South and the Central-West are successful agricultural regions, the latter being largely undeveloped until the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but now seeing rapid growth. The North-East, one of the first regions to be colonised, is now the poorest in the country, leading to sustained immigration from here to the South-East throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The North, covering much of the Amazon basin, is sparsely populated, and also has a low income.

Economic inequalities in Brazil are mirrored by systematic political marginalisation. Democracy is far from being ingrained in Brazilian culture, the colonial period having been followed by a constitutional monarchy from 1833-1889, and then a Republic interrupted by two dictatorships, from 1937-1945 and 1964-1985. The country was until recently “a case study in elections without democracy” (Bethell 2000), illustrated by the fact that illiterates were for a long time denied the vote, meaning disenfranchisement of more than half the adult population as late as 1946. The period since 1985, however, has seen a significant strengthening of democracy, both in terms of formal structures and citizen participation. A number of trade unions and social movements emerged in this period, and a new Constitution was created in 1988. This and subsequent declarations such as the Statute of the Child and the Adolescent of 1999 provide guarantees of substantial political, civil and social rights.

However, the progressive nature of current legislation in Brazil is not matched by implementation, and many of these rights are not fulfilled in practice, particularly those relating to basic welfare. In terms of the political system there are significant flaws in the functioning of democracy. The system is still strongly characterised by *clientilism*, through which political support is given not on the basis of the long-term interests of the population as a whole, but exchanged for short-term protection from local elites, thus perpetuating relations of dependence (Taylor 2004). Many municipalities are still run by the *coronéis* (literally, colonels), heads of powerful family dynasties. There are frequent occurrences of outright vote-buying, with poor families targeted with gifts of basic foodstuffs or energy. With the new electronic voting system, fraud is less common, although still a potential problem.

One of the many immigrants from the impoverished North-East to São Paulo in the 1950s was the future president Luis Inácio Lula da Silva. His unlikely rise from shoe-shine boy to the highest

office in the land marked an important break from the traditional hold of the elites on political power. The party he helped to found, the Workers' Party (Partido dos Trabalhadores, PT), has also been a significant development in Brazilian political history, breaking from the populist tradition in the Latin American left to experiment with new forms of participatory social policy (Brandford & Kucinski 1995). The (perhaps inevitable) disillusionment that has followed the PT's triumphal election to the federal government in 2002 should not detract from the importance of their experience in local governments such as Porto Alegre, and the changes brought to Brazilian political culture in general. However, the country is still far from achieving the political and economic transformation needed to ensure the basic requirements of universal citizenship.

### **The Brazilian education system**

In the 2003 PISA assessment, Brazil ranked last out of 40 countries on mathematics and 37<sup>th</sup> in reading. Even taking into account the limitations of standardised tests and the fact that most of the other countries competing were the wealthiest in the world, this is still a disturbing result. These figures point to a perverseness in the Brazilian system, showing, as in many aspects of society, that Brazil is two countries in one. While it has thriving graduate education provision and research centres, basic primary education for the majority of the population is far from adequate. While primary net enrolment is now 97.6% (IBGE 2007), there are high levels of repetition<sup>13</sup> and drop-out, and continuing concerns about quality, particularly in the poorer regions of the country. Upper secondary enrolment (for students aged 15-17) has also risen sharply, yet the net enrolment is still only 47.1% (IBGE 2007). Only 9% of each year group attend university, although the gross enrolment is much higher, at 20% (INEP 2006; UNESCO 2007). Illiteracy nation-wide for the over-15 population runs at 10.4%, with the figure much higher in rural areas, and over twice this proportion are functionally illiterate (IBGE 2007). In relation to gender, however, Brazil is distinct from many low and middle-income countries. Girls now have higher school enrolment levels than boys at all levels, and the proportion of female university students has now risen to 57.5% (IBGE 2007).

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<sup>13</sup> There have, however, been improvements in repetition levels, in part due to interventions of municipal governments such as that of Belo Horizonte analysed in this thesis. According to IBGE (2007) the proportion of pupils nationwide who had repeated a year at some stage in their primary studies dropped from 41.6% in 1996 to 25.7% in 2006.

Studies such as those of Birdsall and Sabot (1996) and Plank (1996) argue that despite being 'dealt a bad hand' in terms of historical developments, Brazil has also 'played its hand badly', its education system comparing unfavourably with East and South-East Asian countries with similar economic conditions. Other writers point to systematic exclusion of the majority of Brazilians through restrictions of access and through the structures and cultures present in schools (Gentili 1995; Gentili & Frigotto 2000).

The establishment of formal education in Brazil lagged behind that of other colonised countries of the Americas. For most of the colonial period the elites sent their children to be educated in Europe, and access for the majority was extended only to a small degree with independence: in 1869, there were as many as 541 children of school age for every existing classroom, not including the significant slave population. The establishment of the Republic in 1889 brought increasing faith in the potential of education for bringing technological progress and demands for a universal secular public education system, yet change was slow and by 1920 the labour force was still 80% illiterate (Havighurst & Moreira 1965).

A movement known as the *Escola Nova* (New School) emerged in the first half of the 20th century, influenced by progressive education in Europe and the USA (particularly the ideas of John Dewey). Thinkers such as Anísio Teixeira had a significant influence on education in Brazil, leading to moves away from a rigid traditionalist focus on content and towards an emphasis on experience, expression and problem-solving. However, these concerns with process did little to address the acute problems of lack of adequate schooling for the majority of the population (Louro 1986). The pragmatism of the *Escola Nova*, and its faith in methods and scientific progress, prepared the ground for later technicist approaches that characterised the military dictatorship of 1964-1985. This period of military rule led to a suppression of the democratic and progressive elements of the *Escola Nova* and emphasised economic development along with a conservative patriotism, shown by the introduction of Moral and Civic Education as a compulsory subject (Louro 1986). (The subject had previously been made compulsory in the earlier period of authoritarian rule of Getúlio Vargas, 1937-1945.) Quantitative improvements, however, were made from the 1960s, with enrolments increasing at all levels.

The expansion of the system continued under the presidency of Fernando Henrique Cardoso, 1994-2002, which, following World Bank proposals, invested in primary education at the expense



of other levels. A fund known as FUNDEF<sup>14</sup> was established in 1998 to equalise expenditure per pupil on primary education across the country, and ensure it did not fall below a minimum amount. This period was characterised by moves towards decentralisation – particularly a process of *municipalisation* of control and funding – and privatisation, particularly in higher education. In 1996 the influential Law of Directives and Bases of National Education (LDB) was passed, covering all aspects of education, from pedagogy and assessment to administration. These reforms of the Cardoso government have been little changed by the incoming Lula government. Efforts have, however, been made to extend the FUNDEF programme to include secondary and early years education, and to expand access to higher education.

Administration of the education system in Brazil is divided between federal, state and municipal levels. Following the Cardoso reforms, an increasing number of primary schools came under municipal control, although approximately half are still controlled by the states. On account of the highly decentralised nature of the system, there is no unified education policy for the whole country and no national curriculum (except for the National Curriculum Parameters, discussed in the following section). Municipalities and states have considerable freedom to introduce their own distinctive policies.

### **Citizenship and political education in the curriculum**

An important development of the Cardoso era was the publication, in 1997-1998, of the National Curriculum Parameters (NCPs), intended to provide a common base for the curriculum across the country. As stated above, Brazil has a high degree of decentralisation, with state and municipalities having significant autonomy in relation to education policy, so the NCPs are far from representing a national curriculum. Nevertheless, they aim to provide a national reference point, as stipulated by the LDB, which undertook to guarantee to all “the indispensable common education for the exercising of citizenship, and to provide means for progressing in work and subsequent studies”(Candau 2001:14).

A draft of the parameters had been published in 1995 to open a wide debate on the subject before the formulation of the final document. However, reports show that there was little real

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<sup>14</sup> Fundo de Manutenção e Desenvolvimento do Ensino Fundamental e de Valorização do Magistério (Fund for the Maintenance and Development of Primary Education and the Valuing of Teachers).

consultation on the issue, with key decisions taken by a small group advised by the Spanish consultant César Coll, and practising teachers and even university-based researchers had little say on the matter (Candau 2001; Teixeira 2000).

There are separate sets of parameters for grades 1-4 and 5-8 of primary school, and for secondary schools. The primary school parameters feature the customary subject disciplines of Portuguese, Maths, Natural Sciences, History, Geography, Art, PE, and a foreign language. However, an important aspect is the proposal for cross-curricular (*transversal*) themes: ethics, environment, health, cultural plurality, work, sexual orientation and consumer issues. These are intended to be integrated as schools think fit across the range of other subjects and together make up the overarching aim of promoting democratic citizenship. A significant aspect for this study is that there is no theme directly relating to citizenship in its explicitly political sense. Different elements of citizenship are addressed in the themes of cultural plurality, work, consumer issues and ethics, but there is no element relating to political structures, democracy, the constitution, voting and so forth. The area which is most closely related to democracy and politics (particularly in terms of political and democratic values) is ethics.

The general principles on which school education should be oriented according to the NCPs are dignity of the human being, equality of rights, participation and co-responsibility for social life (Teixeira 2000). The moral values expressed in the parameters are uncontroversial perhaps, following the shared bases of international declarations of rights. One distinguishing factor might be its constructivist nature, something characteristic of the NCPs as a whole. It states, for example, "To be a citizen is to participate in a society, having the right to have rights, as well as constructing new rights and reviewing the existing ones" (MED 1997: 54). Yet it distances itself from the moral relativism which is seen to be responsible for part of the country's ills.

In addition, there is some support for active citizenship:

To live together democratically means to have awareness that the role of people is not only to obey and repeat the laws, but to contribute to their reformulation, adaptation and to the elaboration of new laws. (p.79)

The document also recognises that social realities in Brazil are far from the moral and political ideals expressed in the Constitution.

Some commentators (e.g. Candau 2001) see the NCPs as part of an essentially neo-liberal approach to citizenship, although, as can be seen above, it does have an explicit commitment to rights, including social ones. Whatever its orientation, there is no guarantee that the NCPs will be implemented. While there may be subtle ways of ensuring their adoption (Teixeira 2000), the Federal Government cannot force the lower levels of government and schools to change their curricula.

There is, therefore, still a significant lack of citizenship education provision in the Brazilian public education system. Other non-state providers have, however, aimed to fill this gap.

### **Alternative frameworks of education**

Since the start of the 1980s, there has been significant civil society mobilisation in Brazil, initially centred on the restoration of democracy after the military dictatorship, but later extending to other issues such as workers' rights, land distribution, indigenous peoples and police violence. Education is an area in which there has been particularly strong mobilisation and debate, partly because of the informed and active body of teachers and partly because of the importance of schooling in maintaining or transforming wider social inequalities. Social movements, community groups, NGOs, church groups and local governments have all been active in constructing and implementing education alternatives (Bartlett 2005; Fischer & Hannah 2002; Gentili & McCowan 2003; Ghanem 1998; King-Calnek 2006; Myers 2007; Wong & Balestino 2001). These developments in education have been strongly influenced by the ideas of Paulo Freire. The decentralised nature of the Brazilian system has meant that opposition to dominant paradigms has not only taken the form of pressurising central government for policy changes, but also that of actively constructing alternatives at the local level. A number of significant local government initiatives have emerged in the last 20 years, most but not all under municipal (and to a lesser extent state) governments of the PT.

Moreira (2000) identifies two main waves of these local government reforms. The first of these, in the 1980s, sought to introduce basic measures to democratise the management of the school system and to prevent the chronic repetition and dropout of pupils from working-class backgrounds. There was no real challenge at this stage to the form of the curriculum and its

subject divisions, the aim being to allow marginalised groups access to this established curriculum. There were, however, some tentative efforts to introduce Freirean popular education into the public system, such as in the state of Rio de Janeiro under Leonel Brizola. Here an innovative new type of school known as CIEP was introduced, operating throughout the day<sup>15</sup>, and thereby allowing for a wider variety of school activities. In general, however, a radical transformation of schooling was not sustained. According to Gadotti (2000: 48) there were three common elements to the reforms of this period:

1. Lengthening of the school day
2. Integrated provision for the child and adolescent (meaning a multi-faceted and not purely academic programme)
3. Community participation and democratic management

The second wave in the 1990s, however, as well as extending the elements of community participation and democratic management initiated in the previous decade, had a new approach to the curriculum and subject disciplines:

In this way, they moved away from the idea that a curricular plan corresponds to a detailed list of contents, procedures and evaluation for all schools. It was understood that the definition of these elements had to occur in the context of the pedagogical plan of each school, the function of the central administration being to establish the general orienting objectives of the plans. As can be seen, the focus was more on the integration of locally chosen knowledge than a universally systematised one. (Moreira 2000: 119)

The influence of Freire's ideas, and to a lesser extent the reformulations of Freire's followers in the United States in the critical pedagogy movement, can be clearly seen in these reforms. Freire himself was involved in an administrative capacity in the first of these initiatives, in the municipality of São Paulo, where the PT came to power in 1988. Freire was Secretary from January 1989 to May 1991, at the head of a system involving 700,000 pupils and 40,000 employees (Lima 1999).

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<sup>15</sup> Primary schools in Brazil normally function from 8-12 or 1-5 pm.

In order to ensure greater participation, encouragement was given to the establishment of *school councils*, consisting of teachers, parents and students, which would have a share of power and reduce the authoritarian focus on the headteacher and Secretariat. These councils had existed elsewhere but were particularly successful in this administration, with 684 functioning by 1992. There was less success, however, with attempts to introduce direct elections for headteachers, a policy that was later to be implemented by other PT governments around the country, but which in São Paulo was rejected by the teachers themselves (Lima 1999). In terms of institutional autonomy, individual schools developed greater freedom in relation to the curriculum by constructing their own *politico-pedagogical plans*. There were also attempts to establish greater inter-disciplinarity in the curriculum, on the basis of Freirean 'generative themes', categories established on the basis of significant community issues (Moreira 2000).

The best-known of the municipal initiatives in education, however, was the Citizen School of Porto Alegre, developed during the PT local government of 1988-2004. Constructed in opposition to the neo-liberal project and conceptions of the individual as consumer, the initiative came to international attention partly due to the general exposure given to the city on account of its hosting of the World Social Forums. It formed part of a range of significant social policy innovations such as the *participatory budget* (Abers 2000; Hatcher 2002; Navarro 2003). However, it is clear that the Citizen School owed a great deal to previous reforms in São Paulo and also to the theoretical framework of the same name developed at the Paulo Freire Institute (Gadotti 2000; Gadotti & Romão 1997; Padilha 2001). In one of the theoretical works, Romão and Padilha (1997) discuss the concept of *ascending socialised planning*, a central element of the Citizen School. This is a form of participatory democracy in decision-making with its roots in the preliminary meetings of the National Union of Municipal Education Secretaries (UNDIME<sup>16</sup>).

In this way, educational planning and the organisation of school work, considered and followed by all and for all, will not be merely bureaucratic, technical activities, as has happened in the country in recent years; it will be, in contrast, a true exercising of citizenship, because it will involve the participation and the taking of decisions by the population in relation to a service provided by the state. (Romão & Padilha 1997: 81)

In Porto Alegre, a process of collective policy-making (*Consituente Escolar*) was initiated in 1993, involving an investigation of the main issues affecting schools, then a series of debates in

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<sup>16</sup> União Nacional dos Dirigentes Municipais de Educação

schools and regional assemblies. From these discussions, the main thematic axes of policy emerged, and democratisation of the school was addressed in its three dimensions: management, access and knowledge (Azevedo 2002; Gandin & Apple 2002). Democratisation of management involved measures such as the direct elections of heads and deputy heads (with mandates of three years) and of school councils (with mandates of two years). The question of access was addressed by promoting an inclusive agenda in relation to students with special needs and street children, as well as special youth and adult education for those who had not completed primary school. Measures were adopted to address the high levels of repetition and dropout through *formation cycles*<sup>17</sup> (discussed later in the context of the Plural School). These succeeded in bringing the dropout rate from 9% in 1989 to 0.97% in 1998 (Azevedo 2002). The third form of democratisation, that of knowledge, analysed by Gandin and Apple (2002), involved the incorporation of local and minority ethnic knowledge as a valued part of the curriculum.

The Porto Alegre reforms were reflected elsewhere in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, in the PT government in the municipality of Pelotas, 2000-2004 (McCowan 2004b; 2006a). Another initiative of note is the *Escola Cabana* in the city of Belém. This also follows the broad principles of the Citizen School, but adapted to the realities of northern Brazil and the stronger presence of indigenous cultures there. Similar initiatives have been developed in municipalities such as Natal in the north-eastern state of Rio Grande do Norte and Uberaba in Minas Gerais.

### **The Plural School**

The first of the three projects explored in this study falls into this group of Freirean local government initiatives. The Plural School is an initiative of the municipal government of Belo Horizonte, a large city with a metropolitan area of over 5 million inhabitants. The city is capital of the state of Minas Gerais, a large land-locked state at the centre of Brazil, one of economic and political significance in the history of the country. While the region is wealthy in comparison to the North and North-East of Brazil, there are severe inequalities leaving a significant proportion of the population in poverty and political marginalisation. A disproportionate part of this group is made up by the Black and mixed-race population, mostly descendants of the slaves who were brought to the region during the gold boom of the 18th century.

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<sup>17</sup> *Ciclos de formação.*

The Plural School (PS), initiated in the 1990s by the Municipal Secretariat of Education (SMED), is not so much a project or programme as a *framework* of policy and practice. The central principle on which the PS functions is inclusion. The traditional school is seen to exclude sections of the community in a number of ways: through its choice of valued knowledge, its assessment procedures, the structure of the school day and the teacher-student relationship. The framework, therefore, represents an opening of this rigid system to a plurality of individuals, groups and cultures, giving each equal value and opportunity.

The principle statement of the aims of the PS is the document of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Municipal Conference. The *orienting axes* listed here are as follows:

1. A more radical, collective intervention
2. Sensitivity with the totality of human development
3. School as a time of cultural experience
4. School as an experience of collective production
5. The educative virtualities of the materiality of the school
6. The living of each age of development without interruption
7. Adequate socialisation for each age/education cycle
8. New identity of school, new identity of its professional

(SMED 2002)

“A more radical, collective intervention” is here referring to responses to the exclusion of young people from school and knowledge; “The educative virtualities of the materiality of the school” refers to reforms of school structures, in terms of both time and space; and “The living of each age of development without interruption” refers to the importance of recognising children’s rights in the present, rather than being a preparation for the future.

Castro (2000: 11), herself Secretary of Education in the city between 1997 and 2000, asserts that more than a new teaching method, a pedagogical innovation, or simply a cultural intervention, the PS represents a political movement, but one engaged in the arena of educational, cultural and social practices. The PS presents itself not as a government policy but as a grassroots movement of teachers and social movements that gradually gained state support and recognition. Nevertheless, the existence of a PT government in the city was essential to the process of adoption. The PT came to power in Belo Horizonte in 1993, and has remained there in the

governing coalition ever since. The municipal system has some 164 primary and 26 secondary schools<sup>18</sup>, as well as pre-school, special education and youth and adult education provision (INEP 2007). Alongside these, the federal and particularly the state levels of government also run schools.

Some democratisation of the municipal system was seen in the late 1980s and early 1990s, with the introduction of direct elections for heads and deputy heads and increasing participation of the community in the running of the school (corresponding to the first wave of reforms described above). The first Politico-Pedagogical Conference of the Municipal Network in 1990 was a significant moment in the consolidation of these reforms, and led to the creation of the Centre for the Development of Education Professionals (CAPE). The second of these conferences in 1994 marked the emergence of the PS as a concept, although in reality it represented the accumulation of experiences and initiatives since the 1970s. It was adopted as official municipal policy from 1995. The main period of reforms was 1993-1996, after which changes in the Secretariat interrupted the process to some degree (Moreira 2000), but the initiative remains an essential part of government policy. It is important to note that the framework is not adopted unconditionally by all schools or imposed on them, and there is therefore significant difference between schools in the practical implementation of these ideas (Silva & Mello 2001).

The PS aims to combat 'school failure', represented by dropout and *repetition* (pupils traditionally repeat the whole school year if they do not reach the exam level of 60%). The structure of the system and its rigid criteria for repetition lead to many individuals, and certain social groups in particular, not to be able to complete primary school and, as a likely consequence, to their systematic exclusion from valuable living in society. The underlying principles of the framework are well expressed by Castro (2000):

Initially, 'school failure' seemed to reveal the inadequacy of pupils in school, which ended up legitimising their social exclusion. Incapable of proceeding in their studies – exposed to multiple exam failure and repetition which led, in many cases, to dropout – pupils (and their families) gradually internalised the exclusion and made it legitimate as an expression of their individual incapacity or difficulty of adaptation. The right to education, seen simply as the right to access to school, became then the social form of legitimising exclusion.... It was understood that it was necessary to construct a new

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<sup>18</sup> A number of institutions have both primary and secondary provision on the same site.



order of school capable of ensuring the inclusion of all, particularly those sections of the population that were systematically excluded and/or marginalised, guaranteeing them not only access to formal education, but above all the possibility of participating in the construction of new knowledge and the acquisition of knowledge produced throughout the history of humanity. (p.3)

The distinctive feature of the PS, therefore, is its recognition that the realisation of the right to education can be a form of exclusion if attention is not paid to processes within the school.

According to Moreira (2000: 122) the PS differs from the experiences in São Paulo and Porto Alegre in its aim to include people to a greater degree in the process of production of knowledge. Instead of inter-disciplinarity, transversal axes were established, based on themes of contemporary social importance, running through all the subject disciplines. The overarching theme is 'education for citizenship', and includes environment, cultural diversity, gender, ethnicity, sexuality and consumer components. (Ironically, these bear a strong resemblance to the NCPs established in 1997 by the federal government, the latter being established centrally and not by a process of wide consultation and participation as in Belo Horizonte.)

A fair amount of research has been carried out on the PS within Brazil (particularly by researchers and by research students at universities in Belo Horizonte). Much of this has focused on its approach to assessment and the features of restructuring of school time such as the *formation cycles* (Mainardes 2007). Two important publications of the Federal University of Minas Gerais are Dalben (2000a), providing an evaluation of the implementation of the PS as a whole, and Dalben (2000b), an edited collection presenting a diverse range of analyses of the PS framework. Soares (2002) presents an empirical study of implementation of the PS, including an in-depth case study of a single school. These studies are strongly supportive of the PS framework, but highlight the challenges of implementation, particularly in relation to teacher and community misunderstandings and opposition.

Glória and Mafra (2004) also point to problematic elements in their qualitative study of a single school, focusing on the uptake and interpretations of the initiative by the teachers. Their findings point to the overriding sense of imposition and disempowerment among the teachers, and the fact that their understandings are radically different from those of the designers (as seen also in Dalben 2000a). Importantly, given the significance of teacher-student relations for the

development of citizenship, the teachers felt threatened by the loss of authority stemming from no longer being able to grade and fail students, and at having a proposal imposed from above. The authors also state:

Another problem perceived by the teachers is that there exists a lacuna between theory and practice. They think the proposal is good, but they perceive that, in practice, there are many failings. Among these failings, they point to a lack of adequate infrastructure.  
(p.12)

Soares (2001) also presents a case study showing the ambiguities, contradictions and difficulties of teacher uptake of the PS framework. The issues raised in these studies will be addressed in greater detail in relation to the empirical findings discussed in the following chapters.

### **Voter of the Future**

The Voter of the Future programme is distinctive in focusing primarily on elections and in having its motivating force outside the education system, in the judiciary. The legal origins of the programme have a strong influence on the educational orientations and understanding of citizenship.

The programme was designed initially by the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE) in November 2002, for implementation by the TREs<sup>19</sup>, one in each state of the Federation. The inspiration came from observation of a similar programme in Costa Rica. In August 2003 a meeting of representatives from the TREs and from UNICEF (which was invited to participate) in Brasília produced a booklet entitled “Voter of the Future Project: Learning to be a Citizen”, outlining the main aims of the programme and a framework for implementation in the states (TSE 2003). This remains the most comprehensive written document on the programme, and is also highly accessible, intended for use by classroom teachers and other participants, and was distributed to every state.

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<sup>19</sup> The lead agency in Porto Alegre, however, was not the TRE, but the *Juizado da Criança e do Adolescente* (Justice Agency of the Child and Adolescent).

The main aim of the initiative is to develop young people's abilities to be responsible and effective citizens in a liberal democracy. In Brazil, voting is obligatory for people aged 18-70, with financial penalties for those who fail to vote. Those aged 16 and 17 are allowed to vote but are not obliged to do so. TSE statistics from 2000 show that the voting rate amongst this age group was under 50% in most states, and only 13.5 percent in the Federal District. UNICEF's (2002) research project on Brazilian youth, entitled "The Voice of the Adolescents" showed that a staggering 41.3% of 16 and 17-year-olds were not aware that they were entitled to vote. Nevertheless, many of this age group considered politics (even in the form of party politics) to be important and a number were politically active or involved in local community groups.

The aims of the initiative are laid out in *Learning to be a Citizen*:

- To strengthen the citizenship of children and adolescents aged 10-15 who are enrolled in the school system.
- To encourage young people aged 16 and 17 to participate in the democratic process as enabled by the Citizen Constitution of 1988, facilitating their enrolment over the next elections.
- To alert young people to the vices which distort and contaminate the objective and essence of the right to vote, conscientising them on the ethics of politics and the exercising of the vote.
- To inform young people of good and bad electoral practice on the part of candidates and parties, with reference to current electoral legislation.
- To guarantee young people the right to expression and opinion on elections, an important moment of the democratic life of the country.
- To equip and mobilise the young people involved in the initiative for the conscious and free exercising of the vote, guaranteeing them an emancipatory citizenship in the future.

(TSE 2003: 5)

As stated in the document outlining the initiative in the state of Letoria:

The urgent task is to recover and bring to the knowledge of young people the philosophical bases on which the historical struggles for the creation of electoral justice were consolidated, as a way of freeing the electoral process of partisan interests and

political passions, making the vote direct, secret and obligatory, the maximum guarantee of democracy sought after in republican ideals.

Activities are supposed to be particularly prominent in electoral years, with full parallel mock elections for those aged 10-15, and campaigning for voter registration for 16 and 17-year-olds. In some states, activities have been underway since the middle of 2003, reaching a climax in the municipal elections of October 2004. These activities are documented on the respective websites of the TREs. The Yanomia TRE has produced its own DVD, outlining the aims of the programme and showing some of the activities (such as mock elections and debates) in practice. One of the schools involved (Amazonas) has also produced a DVD documenting its activities. However, no formal evaluations of the initiative have as yet been found. The TRE conducted a questionnaire with students in some of the schools participating in the project: these were used to inform the development of initiative, but no formal analysis was undertaken. The only written accounts in Portuguese available are short articles in regional newspapers. A short account appeared in English in a publication of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (Burges 2006). However, this is a summary of the stated aims of the initiative, rather than an empirical assessment of its functioning in practice.

The initiative is intended to be a partnership between different sectors of society, particularly: officials of the electoral system, officials of the child and adolescent justice system, schoolteachers, NGOs, human rights activists and volunteers (TSE 2003: 6). It has been designed on a centre-periphery model, initiated by a national body and disseminated to the regions. There is significant difference in the uptake of the individual states, with substantial activities in some, and only a token acknowledgement of the initiative in others. Some states (e.g. Yanomia and Letoria) staged high-profile launches for the initiative in order to raise awareness in the community at large.

There are some other initiatives in Brazil in a similar vein to Voter of the Future. One of these is *Conscious Vote*, an NGO based in São Paulo which organises courses in politics and democracy within the state. There are also initiatives organised by state legislative assemblies, such as the *School of the Legislative*, in the state of Minas Gerais (Assis 1997). These initiatives contrast strongly with the Freirean ones (such as the PS and MST) through their faith in the existing structures of liberal democracy.

The main part of the research on VF was carried out in the state of Yanomia, located in the North of the country in the Amazonian region. Yanomia, like the rest of this region, is still largely undeveloped and very sparsely populated. Poverty levels are slightly lower than in the North-East, but there are few economic opportunities. In terms of politics, the state shows a number of the challenges facing Brazilian democracy: nepotism, vote-buying, clientilism, limited literacy skills among voters and restricted access to reliable information. The state is heavily dependent on public sector employment, much of which is allocated in return for political support, meaning that many people's livelihoods depend on the election of particular candidates.

The programme was launched in Yanomia in December 2003. A total of 10 primary and secondary schools (eight of these public and two private) were involved in the capital, with adherence to the programme being voluntarily (for details on these schools see Appendix 1).

### **The Landless Movement (MST)**

The Movement of Landless Rural Workers or 'Landless Movement' (MST<sup>20</sup>) is widely recognised as the largest and most influential social movement in Latin America. It grew out of the actions of scattered peasant uprisings and progressive wings of the Catholic Church responding to the urgent need for agrarian reform (Forman 1972). In Brazil, approximately 1% of landowners control 50% of farmland, while there are as many as 4.5 million landless peasants (Brandford & Rocha 2002, Caldart 2000). The country moved from 30% urban population in 1945 to 70% in 1990 (Oxfam 1991) on account of hardship in rural areas and changes in agricultural production, with many of those forced from the land migrating towards a new form of poverty in the *favelas*. The movement was officially founded in 1984 and functioned initially in the south of the country, although now it has spread to 23 of Brazil's 27<sup>21</sup> states.

The state in which the research was carried out, Rio Grande do Sul, was the founding place of the MST, and is still a reference point for the movement as a whole. The state has historically been the agricultural powerhouse of the country, originally through cattle, but later diversifying to other crops such as soya and tobacco. The state's identity is dominated by the figure of the *gaúcho*, the wandering cowboy of the outback, jealously guarding his independence from society.

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<sup>20</sup> Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra

<sup>21</sup> This figure includes the Federal District.

This figure can be seen as a root of two apparently contradictory tendencies in the state: on the one hand, a conservative, machista traditionalism, and on the other, an independence of mind that has made it the cradle for a number of progressive political and intellectual movements in the country. The MST is very much coloured by Rio Grande do Sul's distinctive character, and a number of its influential figures were born there.

The general aims of the movement are:

1. To build a society without exploitation where labour has priority over capital.
2. To ensure that the land is at the service of all in society.
3. To guarantee work for all, with a just distribution of land, income and wealth.
4. To constantly strive for social justice and equality of rights, whether economic, political, social or cultural.
5. To encourage humanist and socialist values in human relations.
6. To combat all forms of social discrimination and promote equal participation for women.

(MST 1995)

Central to the movement's activities is land occupation, whereby a group of families squats on unused agricultural land in one of the large estates. An *acampamento* (camp) is formed, in which high levels of organisation and co-operation are required to sustain the itinerant community. As Gorgen (1989: 17-18) states:

The time in the camp also serves as an apprenticeship for community life, living together, organising to claim one's rights, learning about society, and preparing technologically and organisationally for the future use of the land.

The Brazilian Constitution states that idle farmland must be allocated for land reform, and after long struggles with the government, the families will often win the right to stay. The camp then becomes an *assentamento* (settlement) and the families can then begin to farm their own land, which they do either individually or collectively. Aside from land occupations, other forms of protest have also been used such as demonstrations, road marches, occupation of public buildings, urban camps, and, in extreme circumstances, hunger strikes (MST 2001: 199-203). The use of violence is not sanctioned by the movement, but its activities inevitably put it in conflict with the police, as well as with the landowners' militias. This has resulted in frequent injury and loss of

life, the worst of which was the massacre of Eldorado de Carajás in 1996 in which 19 landless people were killed.

The aims of the MST, however, go beyond the winning of land for those without it. The movement is strongly committed to the transformation of society as a whole, replacing the unjust capitalist system with one in which all people can live and work in dignity, solidarity and equality. With time, the focus has moved from the local to the national level, and even to global issues such as world trade agreements and genetically modified organisms (Caldart 2000). The MST is an active member of the Via Campesina, a global network of rural movements, and has been present at a number of international events such as the World Social Forum. There has been international recognition of its work, with the movement being awarded the UNICEF prizes for rural education in 1995 and 1999.

The rapid growth of the movement has made necessary strong organisational structures. There are elected co-ordination committees at community, regional and state levels: each of these send two representatives to the next level, culminating in a national co-ordination committee. In addition, there are smaller state councils and a national council of 21 people which have a central role in the running of the movement. The administration is also divided into *sectors*, relating to different fields of activity. These include production, recruitment, co-operatives, education, gender and international relations. National conferences are held every five years to establish the overall strategies of the movement.

Soon after the first settlements were established it became clear that some form of educational provision would be necessary for the children of the landless. Furthermore, a large proportion of the adults were themselves illiterate and needed to develop basic skills to improve their agricultural work and enable effective political participation. A few primary schools emerged, along with adult literacy classes, staffed mainly by those few members of the community who had completed school. After struggles with local authorities, communities managed to have their schools officially recognised, and thereby gain state funding and provision of teachers and materials. Education soon became a key priority for the movement, and today there exists a network of 1,500<sup>22</sup> schools which have provided for 160,000 children, many of whom otherwise could have expected no more than a few years of poor quality primary education. In the southern

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<sup>22</sup> Only 200 of these, however, have the complete eight grades of primary school, and only 20 have secondary provision (MST 2004).

states, an innovative form known as the *itinerant* school has been established, a mobile institution that follows its students when a camp is uprooted and moved to a new location. The itinerant school gained legal recognition in Rio Grande do Sul in 1996. There are also many thousands of students in youth and adult education, as well as provision in infant education, technical secondary courses, and other HE courses in partnership with established universities. The first formal teacher education courses at secondary level were run in 1990, and in 1998 a higher education programme for teachers was established, using a distinctive approach termed *pedagogy of the land*, emphasising the movement's political and rural concerns (MST 2004).

These quantitative gains are an achievement in themselves. Yet the aim of the MST is to transform the fundamental nature of education as well:

Faced with the tradition of an elitist, authoritarian, bureaucratic, content-heavy, 'banking'<sup>23</sup> school, with a narrow and pragmatist conception of education, [we have] the challenge of constructing a popular, democratic, flexible, dialogical school, a space for a holistic human development in movement. (MST 2004: 15)

In this process of pedagogical transformation, the key influence is Paulo Freire, but the movement also draws on educationists like Jose Martí and Anton Makarenko. The principle goals of the MST education system are as follows:

- To eradicate illiteracy in the camps and settlements
- To make sure that all children are in school
- To train teachers for the camps and settlements
- To elaborate and develop a new pedagogy to strengthen rural culture
- To gain the support of entities and people who share the educational principles of the movement

(MST 2001)

This study will only assess MST primary schools, and not the many other forms of education with which the movement is engaged. In many ways, the technical, higher, adult and non-formal education in the MST show much more explicitly and clearly the distinctive approach of the

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<sup>23</sup> i.e. Freire's conception of 'banking education'.



movement. In primary education, the differences are much more subtle. In this study, however, only primary education will be assessed, in order to preserve some form of comparability with the other initiatives, and because this study is concerned with the ways citizenship can be promoted through formal education for young people. For the same reasons, the study will focus only on *assentamento* schools, and not the itinerant schools of the *acampamentos*. In addition, the very important aspect of rural culture and identity and agricultural practices will only be covered in a cursory way here.

One core element is that education in the MST is organically linked to the social movement. This idea is best expressed by Roseli Caldart (2000; 2001), perhaps the most influential education theorist in the movement. In her work she explores the rich dialectic of the school in the movement and the movement as a school. One of her key motifs is *pedagogy in movement* in which she sees the educational work of the MST as one that is constantly being created and recreated by the practical experience of educators in camps and settlements, in dialogue with theoretical influences. Another is the importance of the *Sem Terra* (landless) identity, which, following Thompson's (1980) analysis of the English working class, she sees as fundamental to the development of the social movement as a political actor.

One area in which the MST has aimed to address social inequalities is gender. One of the movement's six principal goals is "to combat all forms of social discrimination and seek the equal participation of women". The National Sector of Gender has consequently been established to help achieve this aim within the movement. One manifestation of this goal is the requirement that one of the two delegates representing each community (and each state) must be a woman. By the year 2000, nine of the eighteen elected members of the national leadership were women, a considerable achievement in a country where fewer than 10% of the representatives in the Lower House and the Senate are female. Nevertheless, the traditional machista attitudes and practices of the wider society can still be seen within the movement, and women can struggle to be accepted in roles other than those of the home and child rearing. Dan Baron Cohen (2004), a British activist working with the MST in the area of arts education, and co-ordinator of the well-known monument to the Eldorado de Carajás massacre, has criticised the lack of attention to difference within the movement. He proposes moving from a 'culture of resistance' to a 'culture of liberation', to develop creative expression and address issues such as sexuality.

Another difficult issue concerns the running of its state-funded (mostly primary) schools. For the movement, this is problematic since the local authorities can impose teachers unfavourable to its aims and thereby undermine the distinctive philosophy of the school. Yet the MST resists running its schools privately, partly because it lacks the funds to do so, and also because it is strongly in favour of the idea of public schooling. From the point of view of the state, MST schools are problematic as they have a specific ideology which may not be sufficiently 'lay' to justify state school status. Nevertheless, governments recognise that the MST is playing a fundamental role in providing basic schooling in many rural areas, and thus tolerate it.

Outside Brazil, a few general works on the MST have been published, such as Wright and Welford (2003) and Brandford and Rocha (2002). The latter publication has a chapter outlining the origins and basic principles of the education system, and another introductory analysis can be found in Kane (2001). However, the vast majority of the literature is published within Brazil and available only in Portuguese. Much of the significant body of literature on the MST has come from activists of the movement itself, and sympathetic outsiders – mainly from the Catholic Church – who have sought to use their writing to gain support for the struggle. Most important of these are João Pedro Stédile (Stédile & Martins 1997), one of the founding members of the MST, who traces the history of the movement; Sérgio Gorgen (1989; 1991) who reveals the repression and massacres of landless people by military police; and Ademar Bogo (1999), who provides a framework for organisation and mobilisation in the struggle for land reform.

As mentioned above, the most important writer on MST education is Roseli Caldart, a member of the movement's national educational co-ordination centre. There are also a number of publications by writers outside the movement, but strongly sympathetic to it. Knijnik's (1996; 1998) work focuses on ethnomathematics in the movement. Diniz-Pereira (2005) discusses the innovative approach to teacher education and its implications for social transformation, while Beltrame (2000) assesses the development of teacher identity in the settlements. Menezes (2001; 2003) focuses on the place of work in MST schools, assessing their use of the *alternância* system, in which pupils spend alternate weeks at school and at home, as well as student self-organisation. The latter aspect is also analysed by Janes (1998).

While the negative portrayals of the MST in the press (e.g. Weinberg 2004) are for the most part sensationalist accounts based on limited knowledge of the movement, there are a small number of works that are critical of the movement, but from a basis of sustained research. The sociologist

José de Souza Martins (2000), for example, who has been involved with the movement since its early stages and is an advocate of land reform, has become sceptical of the type of solution provided by the MST, describing it as:

a contradictory way of fusing a conservative social framework (based on land, family, community, religion and family production) with an ideological discourse that appears left-wing, radical and revolutionary. (Martins 2000: 1)

Denying the participatory rhetoric of the movement, he claims that the cause of the rural poor has been usurped by middle class radicals who have then imposed their own vision. Navarro (2002) also criticises the authoritarian structures in the movement and the occurrences of political indoctrination, particularly in relation to young activists moving into positions of responsibility. Previous research I have conducted (McCowan 2002) has indicated that while the movement is successful in developing critical understanding and attitudes towards the government and state structures, it is less successful at doing so towards the movement itself. Given the extreme external threats facing the MST (particularly from the landowners and their militias) and the need for internal unity for effective co-ordination, it is no surprise that critical attitudes can become a secondary priority. However, the right-wing press has certainly exaggerated the extent of 'brainwashing' in the movement.

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This chapter has aimed to provide the background context in which the three initiatives are located. It is one that is characterised by extreme inequalities and political marginalisation, but also by determined popular movements for change. While sharing the same basic context, the three cases show very different responses to problems in society and distinct approaches to the promotion of effective citizenship. The following chapter will assess these differences.

## Chapter 5

### Ideals, Aspirations and Orientations

Educational initiatives may have a few core figures, but they customarily develop out of multiple influences and through collective discussions as well as particular contributions. Their underlying orientations are also expressed through a number of different forms. These factors make it challenging to pin down specific orientations. All the individuals involved and the official documents in these three cases have subtly different understandings. These differences are acknowledged in the following discussion, while at the same time attempting to identify core common principles. To achieve the latter, I will draw only on those respondents who are 'within' the initiative, or have fully internalised it, and not those considered to be at the periphery of, or opposed to, the initiative. The latter are important to this study, and will be discussed at length in the following chapters, but may be misleading in the attempt to understand the underlying principles. In practice this means that most of the respondents drawn on in this chapter are coordinators or officials. However, there is also reference to some teachers who are strongly involved in the construction or development of the framework, such as Vicente, headteacher of Treviso School, who grew up within the MST, and Dora and Ermenegilda, former and current heads of Barroso School, who have both worked closely with the SMED on the PS.

#### **Understandings of society and the individual**

The distinctions between the three initiatives have at their root two fundamental factors: an understanding of the nature of society and its current state, and an understanding of how problems can be addressed and society can prosper. These two aspects can be seen as 'diagnosis' and 'cure', or in a less negative light, as 'interpretation' and 'response'. Here, the focal point is the initiatives' understandings of citizenship and the polity, and the ways education can contribute to them. The latter aspect will be covered predominantly in chapter 6, with this chapter focusing on the ideals and aims, although there will be some discussion of education here too, as the two are not always clearly separated in the discussions of the initiatives.

In fact, all three initiatives see contemporary society in a predominantly negative light. Of the three, the MST has the most developed analysis of society and its ills. It subscribes to a predominantly Marxist view of Brazilian history, seeing the widespread poverty and inequality as the result of the historic and continuing exploitation of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie (MST 2001). Treviso School's *Politico-Pedagogical Plan* starts with the following passage:

We live in a capitalist society, structured according to a neo-liberal regime. A society in which profit is above all else, leaving human values to one side, reinforcing social and cultural inequalities, increasing exclusion and undermining the foundation of society, that is the family.

Education is organised and developed so as to guarantee the structural continuance of the neo-liberal system, forming mere workers, without the ability to make a critical reading of society or to form their own conceptions, that is to say, an alienating education, one that has as an ally in this task the mass media, principally television.

The movement, therefore, understands the existence of the impoverished landless as the result of the capitalist system and the greed of the ruling classes, and not as a 'natural' process of modernisation of agriculture or demographic shift. History is made by humans and can be changed by humans. At the centre of the ills of society, therefore, is the capitalist system, and specifically the 'latifúndios', the large rural estates common in Brazil, concentrating power in the hands of the few. Citizens are deprived of their right to work, to live on the land and to receive a full set of social benefits. They are also excluded from decision-making in the polity. School is seen to have a key role in the maintenance of inequalities. Marco, a state co-ordinator, stated in interview:

I think that it [school] works for the maintenance of the system that's there, so I think it's not neutral. It's there for...the maintenance of the privileges, of the customs, of the tradition of the elite....<sup>24</sup>

The response is primarily a transformation of the economic system leading to collectivisation of wealth. With resources distributed evenly, political equality becomes a possibility, but the MST in this case advocates not a centralised state, but a radical democratic system, albeit with

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<sup>24</sup> Details of the interview participants can be found in Appendix 2.

hierarchical structures of representation. In this, the MST distances itself from some other Marxist movements as shown in the following statement from the booklet *Principles of Education in the MST*:

We have already learnt that social transformation is a complex process, which cannot be reduced to a simple seizure of political or economic power. It implies a process of a number of other changes that will be capable of building a new type of power, no longer oppressive or repressive like this one.... (MST 1999a: 7)

This transformation is to be achieved through the direct action of social movements, pressurising for a transformation of the state and bringing a transformation of consciousness in the working class. As stated in the same document: "It is about an education that does not hide its commitment to developing class consciousness and revolutionary consciousness, both in the learners and the teachers" (p.6). It is a vision, therefore, that gives some space for agency – for individual understandings and actions for transforming society – in addition to the necessary structural changes.

This understanding makes education central to the vision of the MST. The overarching aim of education in the movement is to:

Link[s] itself organically with the social processes which aim to transform the current society, and with the construction, from here on, of a new social order, one whose main pillars are social justice, radical democracy, and humanist and socialist values. (MST 1999a: 6)

Humanist and socialist values are later defined as:

those values, then, which place at the centre of the processes of transformation the human person and his or her liberty, but not as an isolated individual, but as a being of social relations that aim for the collective production and appropriation of the material and spiritual goods of humanity, justice in the distribution of these goods, and equality in the participation of all people in these processes. (MST 1999a: 9)

Humanisation, a term commonly found in Freire's work, is referred to frequently here (and in the Plural School). For example, Ruth, headteacher of Salinas School, identified the school's aims as:

To work with humanist values, to work to form human beings that are more human, with more companionship, more participation, who could have a spirit of sacrifice and co-operation.

In Freire (1972) it relates to a radical regaining of agency and liberation from oppression. However, in the data there is a 'softer' use of the term, relating to the education of the whole person, instead of fragmenting technical approaches (although on some occasions it retains its liberatory meaning). This is referred to as a *unilateral* rather than an *omnilateral* approach. It must be remembered, however, in the light of the issues discussed in chapter 3, that the MST respondents may have been reluctant to discuss the more political aspects of education and have favoured elements of progressive pedagogy in their responses.

MST (1999a: 30) has a section entitled, 'Learning to be a citizen: commandments for acting in today's Brazil'. It sets out 13 'commandments', including (in summarised form): indignation against oppression; struggle for justice; opposing the lies of neoliberalism; the creation of a new society; exercising solidarity; valuing history; and cultivating hope. The vision outlined here shows the distinctive MST commitment to the collective political struggle for equality and justice, and a process of individual and collective development in response to the dehumanisation of capitalism.

The MST, therefore, has a clearly defined understanding of society and of the structural and personal transformations necessary in response. It can be summed up as a form of democratic Marxism, requiring popular mobilisation and the transformation of consciousness. There is a high degree of consensus on this vision among the activists and teachers of the movement.

The Plural School initiative, on the other hand, is formed around a notion of social exclusion. As the co-ordinator Kelly stated, "The fundamental principle of the Plural School is to be an inclusive citizen school". The document from the first politico-pedagogical conference of Barroso School, entitled *Democracy, Ethics and Inclusion*, also starts from a presupposition "that the commitment of the school is with the structuring of an inclusive society". The term 'plural' in the name of the initiative refers to the plurality of experiences of the different schools which coexist

within the municipal framework, and not to pluralism in its general political sense. 'Inclusive school' would be an equally good description of the initiative, a point made by one of the respondents, Luciana, an official in the SMED.

According to the vision of the PS, many citizens are left 'outside' the valued arenas of society, such as the government and technological development, and from sharing in valued resources and wealth. The excluded are first and foremost the poor, but reference is also made to specific groups such as Afro-descendants, *favela* dwellers and people with disabilities. There is in this case not such a clear analysis of the roots of exclusion as in the MST. However the Barroso School conference document includes a number of references to capitalist society:

There exists a capitalist, exploitative logic, which works in the interests of capital, and subservience to money, and does not create spaces for transformatory possibilities which might disrupt its order.

In this, it appears to share the understanding of the MST, as it does in recognising the role of class struggle. The document of the SMED conference refers to "the struggle of the workers for their rights, among them, the right to education" (SMED 2002: 25). However, for the most part, the PS does not make specific diagnoses of this sort, since overly prescriptive accounts of society go against the initiative's 'pluralist' basis.

Since school is an important source of social exclusion, it is also a key site for reversing the situation. Luciana stated:

... I think that in a country like ours, a crucial thing is to have an inclusive school, a school for everyone, guaranteeing the right to education. And to guarantee this school for all...these children, young people and adults that we see as having a trajectory of exclusion, whether in the family, in their own lives, means that...the traditional school won't do, it means rethinking the organisation of pedagogical work, the organisation of time, the organisation of spaces, so that school welcomes all.

This initiative, therefore, shares a good deal with the MST in that both see there existing deeply ingrained structures that systematically work against some sections of society (and thus both are against the liberal conception of procedural equality). In terms of responses, they both adhere to a



belief that school must be fundamentally transformed as a key part of transforming society. However, the MST vision is wider in this respect, focusing on both non-educational forms of direct action (such as land occupation) and non-formal education (i.e. transformation of consciousness through participation in the struggle). These differences can to some extent be explained by the nature of the organisations: the PS is the project of schoolteachers and officials in the SMED and as such unavoidably focuses on the institution of school, whereas the MST is a movement that encompasses areas other than education.

The third initiative, Voter of the Future, is distinct in that it is strongly supportive of liberal multi-party democracy. However, it sees that the existence of formal structures does not guarantee a successful democracy, and that there are serious problems with its functioning in Brazil. These problems are principally those of corruption – both general financial corruption, and specifically abuses of the electoral system – and are caused by a combination of unscrupulous self-interested politicians and an apathetic and ill-informed electorate. As Amanda, the co-ordinator in Seconia, stated:

Our country is suffering various crises in the political sphere because of a lack of awareness. So we need to motivate these pupils to have a greater reflection, not to exchange their vote for basic provisions....

The system, according to this view, is good, but those participating in it (or at least some of them) are not. If the people can act in a moral, responsible and critical manner, then society will function justly and well. This vision, therefore, appears to give weight to agency, although, from the perspective of the other two initiatives, at the expense of acknowledging the importance of structures.

Some of the language of inclusion, like the PS, is also seen in the Seconia programme, which aims, “to bring about the social, political and economic inclusion of young people between 10 and 15 years”. However, this does not characterise the initiative as a whole. The dominant conception in the VF is that the current economic, political and social structures are not inherently unjust, and will work for the good of all if used properly.

The strategy of reform is a long-term one, and involves the education of youth. New generations must be informed of their rights, taught to be honest and respect the law and encouraged to be

active citizens. Part of this is simply encouraging positive feelings towards the political sphere, and discouraging apathy and cynicism, in much the same vein as Bernard Crick (1964):

Because politics is important, the politicised person is essential. Why am I going to register at 16? Why am I going to vote for a thief?.... We have to change their consciousness. That politicians aren't thieves. There are so many good people in Congress, so many people that work well, but that are not valued, that the media doesn't focus on. (Interview with Amanda)

In the view of the project, the abuses of power and the electoral system are less likely to occur if citizens are aware of the 'rules' and keep themselves informed of current developments. Representatives are less likely to renege on their promises if their electors are actively monitoring the actions of government. There is a strong emphasis on political parties and their policies rather than candidates (responding to relatively weak awareness of the former and a strong dependence on the personalities of the latter in Brazilian politics), as indicated by the Letoria programme's exhortation: "To vote for ideas, programmes, proposals and work, and not to vote for promises and people". The initiative is careful, however, not to favour any specific political party:

...the objective is to create in these adolescents, our future voters, awareness of the importance of the vote.... but with one observation, with care not to influence them in their party political choices, we leave these party political choices in the charge of other values, you see, of the family, of other groups the adolescents are linked with. (Interview with Antonio, a judge in Yanomia)

The initiative is seen to fill a "lacuna" in this respect, with this role of political education not being provided by any other institution, and no coverage of electoral law in the curriculum in secondary schools or universities.

The moralistic aspect of the initiative is seen in relation to electoral corruption, illustrated by the unequivocal language of *Learning to be a Citizen*. One of the six objectives of the initiative is to "alert young people to the vices that disfigure and contaminate the objective and the essence of the right to vote". The next is to "inform young people of good and bad electoral practices", the black-and-white moral perspective contrasting particularly with the constructivist Plural School. Observation of a lecture given to students by Antonio confirms this form of approach, with the

judge trying to encourage the qualities of honesty and responsibility in the students. In interview he referred to the “path of good” and the “path of evil”, the “correct” and the “mistaken” in relation to electoral practice.

VF, therefore, is characterised by an adherence to the structures and principles of liberal democracy, with an awareness of the current abuses and malfunctionings of the system, and proposing in their place upholding of the law and active, responsible citizenship. Education is seen as a means of individuals developing the necessary knowledge and moral qualities to participate effectively, and keep those in power accountable.

A summary of the distinct positions of each of the three initiatives is shown in the following table:

	<b>MST</b>	<b>Plural School</b>	<b>Voter of the Future</b>
<b>Problems of society</b>	Capitalism, individualism	Exclusion (from resources, knowledge, political power etc.)	Corruption, apathy
<b>Response</b>	Socialist state, transformation of consciousness, collectivism	Inclusion, respecting difference	Upholding of law, critical and informed voting

### **Notions of citizenship**

All three initiatives make use of the notion and language of citizenship. The educational work of the MST, for example, is seen to be based on “the transformation of those ‘torn from the land’, those ‘poor in every way’ into citizens, prepared to fight for a dignified place in history” (MST 1999b: 5). This passage shows the distinctive conception of the MST, seeing the citizen as someone who “fights” for her rights, instead of automatically receiving them, and valuing above all else the ability to make “history”. There is, however, awareness among the respondents of the dangers of the term citizenship as a ‘sliding signifier’. The co-ordinator Marco stated: “This issue of citizenship, in this case, is a very degraded word.”

The symbiotic relationship between education and citizenship in the PS is shown in Baptista (1998: 2):

[The notion of the right to education] presupposes, therefore, seeing the educational experience lived by the subjects – pupils and teachers – as citizenship in action, constituted by and constituting of the citizens who participate in it.

This notion of “citizenship in action”, which recalls Unterhalter’s (1999) intersecting spheres of education and citizenship, is highly significant in understanding the conception of the initiative, and distinguishing it, particularly, from VF (which adheres to the more straightforward ‘education enables citizenship’ and ‘education as a citizen’s right’ approach).

That citizenship is central to the PS vision is shown by their visual representation of the ideal curriculum (SMED 2002: 28), in which ‘Education for Citizenship’ is the central theme around which the subjects and transversal themes are developed. In the Barroso School conference document it is stated that schools should “promot[e], more than the formation of future scientists, the education of citizens”, and that care must be taken:

not to transform education only for the service of the requirements of the workplace, but with the aim of forming the citizen as a whole. It is to create the lettered citizen capable of reading and writing in all the new languages.

The initiative’s emphasis on access to new technologies as part of citizenship shown in the last sentence of this passage appears on a number of occasions in PS documents.

VF makes even greater use of the notion of citizenship than the previous two, the Seconia programme stating that, “The principal objective of the programme is to awaken and recover citizenship”. The link with education is also clearly stated in the TSE document: “The exercising of full citizenship cannot be reached, if not through education”.

An important question concerns the extent to which the initiatives see citizenship as a future state, once adulthood has been reached, or one enjoyed by children too (a theme discussed in relation to the normative literature). The PS bases its approach on the understanding that:

The separation between time for education and time for action, time for childhood and time for adulthood, made time in school have meaning only in as far as it was a *preparation* for other times. Childhood and adolescence stopped having meaning as periods in themselves, as specific ages of the lived experience of rights. The child and the adolescent are not recognised as subjects of rights in the present (SMED 2002: 16. Original emphasis)

In response, the PS sees the *emerging school* as bringing these rights into the present. The MST shares this vision, seeing children as political actors in their own right. Consequently, it holds regular regional and national meetings of the *sem terrinhas* (little landless), in which there is a combination of recreational activities and discussion of children's interests.

In the VF programme, the *Learning to be a Citizen* document does acknowledge the actual and not just potential role of children and young people in politics. However, the name of the initiative is a clear indication of a conception of *future* citizenship, and this is backed up by evidence from the Seconia programme: "we will be in this way politically raising awareness and preparing those who will participate, in the near future, in the fundamental political decisions of the country". This indicates a split between the vision of the judiciary and that of UNICEF, which, while having no continuing participation in the project, was influential in the creation of the original booklet (TSE 2003). While the judiciary focuses on political rights and responsibilities in the future, seeing childhood as a preparation for that, UNICEF stresses that children possess rights in the present and must have their voices heard now.

All three of these initiatives see the development of effective forms of citizenship as an answer to the problems of society. Yet they have very different ideas on what that citizenship should consist of. The rest of the chapter will assess these different conceptions in relation to the four key tensions identified in chapter 2: rights and duties; universality and difference; the local, the national and global; and conformity and criticality.

## Rights and duties

All three initiatives place greater emphasis on rights than on duties. To a large extent this is because all three are reacting against forms of education such as the imposed nationalistic citizenship education of the Vargas and military dictatorships (the obligatory Moral and Civic Education). The problem is no longer seen to be that of how the individual can help increase the glory of the nation, but how the nation can best address the needs of individuals. However, while all three place stronger emphasis on rights, they do so in very different ways.

The most distinctive is VF, which understands rights very much in terms of their legal basis. This is to be expected given that the promoting body is the judiciary, with many of those involved in the initiative being judges or legal assistants working in the area of electoral law. The most important right, therefore, is seen to be the right to a free and fair vote within the representative system. However, this is located within a wider structure of rights based on three main codes: firstly, and most importantly, the Brazilian Federal Constitution of 1988; secondly, the Brazilian Statute of the Child and the Adolescent of 1990, and thirdly, the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The inclusion of the latter two frameworks is likely to be due to the influence of UNICEF. The differences are in evidence in the booklet, which emphasises the social rights of health, education and security, as well as the political rights favoured by the judiciary.

In answer to the question “What is citizenship?”, *Learning to be a Citizen* responds “the right to have rights; the right to know one's rights; the right to enjoy one's rights; the right to construct new rights every day” (p. 17). First, children must know their rights. As Antonio stated, “In Brazil this is sad. We have rights and we don't know which are our rights”. Yet rights must also be *exercised*: “there is no point having rights guaranteed without exercising them, without getting the full worth of each one of them every day” (TSE 2003: 17). This points to an active conception of citizenship through the ‘exercising’ of rights, although these are rights that have been granted ‘from above’, implying passivity in another sense.

However, there is also emphasis in the documents on duties, particularly in relation to respecting electoral law. The right to a free and fair election is seen to go hand in hand with the duty to vote effectively. In the programme outline of Seconia, a vote is clearly seen to be a duty rather than a right, described as a “responsibility”. The interplay between rights and duties is particularly emphasised in the document from Morães School in Yanomia:

The vote is one of the most important rights and duties of the Brazilian citizen.... The voter must be aware; it is very important that citizens choose honest and competent people who know how to respect our laws and work for an ever better Brazil. A nation is greatly in need of its people and its governors. A good government depends on a good choice.

The duties element is also emphasised strongly in the introduction to the children's book *Hector of the Future* used in Seconia state, where it is stated that, "It is necessary that the young person, before anything else, has a notion of what citizenship is and what his or her responsibilities are in virtue of being a citizen". These responsibilities are not those promoted by the previous nationalist governments in Brazil, but those of liberal democracy: of respecting institutions and obeying the law, and of acting to change those laws through constitutional channels if needs be.

For the MST, on the other hand, rights are won historically, particularly through the struggle of the working class, and are in a constant process of recreation. As Nilda, state co-ordinator, says, "we are subjects of rights. Subjects are only really going to be subjects if they have a process of struggle, of participation and a process of transformation". Unlike VF, therefore, the movement speaks about rights essential to humanity that are not (or perhaps not yet) enshrined in law, such as the right to land, their right to work for all and so forth. Most emphasis is placed on social, rather than civil or political rights, largely because it is the former which are most fragile in Brazil. The headteacher Vicente criticised conceptions of citizenship based on formal political rights:

If you ask someone who doesn't have critical consciousness... he [sic] is likely to tell you: "no, today everyone is a citizen. There's citizenship. Every Brazilian, man or woman, can vote because there are no differences between men and women at the hour of voting.... We understand that to be a citizen, to have a dignified life, is to have the right to education...to health...to work...to housing, to leisure.

Yet, he does later stress that the vote is nonetheless important, and that political change must come about via the ballot box (in conjunction with education) and not through violent revolution. Vicente's statement suggests the subordination of duties to rights:

I think that the role of school...is essential, because...you help to form citizens, people conscious of their rights. Who know what is their right, what they have a right to, and also, of course, the concept of their duties, but principally conscious of their rights, they themselves will look to guarantee their rights, because they are conscious that these are their rights.

The language of 'duties' is little used, but some elements of the notion can be observed, particularly in relation to the social movement. All landless people must 'do their bit' to bring about the desired agrarian reform, they must be prepared to sacrifice themselves for the cause. However, duties here are to the movement and not to the state. The duty is based on a sense of justice and indignation at oppression, which is seen to lead to an obligation for political action. This is different from the sense of duty in VF, which, while not based on a blind 'my country right or wrong' patriotism, is concerned with contributing to the effective functioning of existing societal structures.

The title of the SMED document *Plural School: the Right to have Rights* (Baptista 1998) shows the importance of the notion in this initiative. Furthermore, the two underlying principles stated in this document – "the right to have rights" and "the construction of an inclusive school" – show the linkage between rights and the central motif of inclusion. Rights, therefore, are largely seen in terms of the right of all people to be included in society. These are, then, moral rather than legal rights. In contrast to the VF, the PS distinguishes its conception of rights from legalistic ones:

In this sense, the notion of the right to education in the Plural School presents itself in a new perspective, incorporating the dimension of practices, discourses and values which affect the ways in which inequalities appear in public sphere.... It signals, therefore, a new conception of rights which is not restricted to the guarantees written in law and in institutions. (Castro 2000: 6)

Baptista (1998: 2), co-ordinator in the SMED and author of the above-mentioned text, clearly shows the distinction drawn between formal and actual rights in relation to school:

Despite being inscribed for decades as a social right in the country, education is being denigrated in the day-to-day social practices, which make the law an innocuous statute from the point of view of the segments excluded from society.



In relation to this question, the Barroso School document states:

This means understanding education as a right which must be guaranteed for all. The right to education expresses itself, in this way, as the right to inclusion and retention in a school which covers the multiple dimensions of human development.

This right, therefore, goes beyond enrolment. All people are seen to have the right to have access to valued knowledge, but also to participate in the creation of that knowledge. As Baptista (1998: 2) states:

It is important to emphasise that the notion of the right to education...imposes the necessity that the construction of the desired education be thought out from the perspective of the subjects that exercise it, whether students or teachers.

In contrast, duties are rarely mentioned in the PS, nor are the moral qualities required of citizens: it is the school/society that need to change, not the students/citizens.

Participation is a key aspect of citizenship, and one of the four dimensions proposed by McLaughlin (1992). All three initiatives are strongly supportive of active political participation by all people in society. Yet they differ in relation to the types of participation valued, and in whether participation is considered a right or a duty. It is highly significant whether it is considered one or the other since this reveals deeper understandings of society: participation as a right indicates a situation in which parts of the population have been systematically marginalised from political power and are engaged in a struggle to regain their influence. Participation as a responsibility indicates a situation in which either there is seen to be equality of opportunity and lesser political participation is due to individual lack of enthusiasm or ability, or one in which what matters is the good of the nation as a whole, making individual interests secondary.

*Learning to be a Citizen* is unequivocal in the importance given to political participation, its first line being, "The project Voter of the Future was conceived in order to stimulate the citizen participation of children and adolescents in the electoral process" (TSE 2003: 5). As well as voting, people have the option to stand as a candidate in elections, thereby allowing for different levels of participation for different people, depending on inclination. Participation, however, does

not extend to social movement-type activities, or direct forms such as protests and campaigning (as in the categorisation of Torney-Purta et al. 2001). Yet, there is awareness of the limitations of elections: the Seconia document refers to the “restricted conception of citizenship that is the exercising of the vote”.

In the introduction to *Hector of the Future*, the necessity of political participation for all citizens is made clear:

We understand that school has a mission to transmit basic knowledge in relation to the matters outlined above [citizenship, rights and duties etc.], reducing, in this way, the number of politically disinterested people, that is to say, those people who are proud to say that they don't like politics and leave their participation as citizens to others, and end up sorting out their lives any old way.

This passage confirms the notion of participation as a duty. In the story, a nightmare scenario occurs because of the lack of action of individual citizens: “People watch their rights being disrespected and did not know how to use their power to modify things... to do any differently”.

The PS also makes frequent references to participation. Luciana speaks of the importance of going beyond knowledge of rights and duties to active engagement:

It's not that this citizen ... has rights and duties, it's about him understanding the reality he lives in, it's the citizen role of trying to change, trying to transform, even if not, I wouldn't say, his environment, but at least his life.

Participation for the PS is a right rather than a duty, since people have historically been excluded from society and school. Participation is both a regaining of people's legitimate place at the table of decision-making and also a means of providing influence so that the future direction of society will be more just. There are two aspects, therefore: status as a participating member, and action through the participatory role.

Like the MST, the PS also supports a conception of rights being ‘won’ by the people through the struggle, a conception that is conspicuously absent in VF.

So we see in the case Belo Horizonte today, the participatory budgets,...where the community mobilises itself and goes to the assemblies to fight for the building of a crèche, for the building of a clinic, this means, this is being a citizen, but the group must be together and there, in search of a right.... (Interview with Luciana)

Participation for the MST is often linked to the notion of becoming 'subjects of history', of having the capacity for transforming the world, and being aware of that capacity. Freire (1972; 1994) understood the state of oppression to involve a false understanding that the individual has little or no control over destiny, and liberation to involve a realisation of the dependence of external reality on internal thought and action, leading to transformatory action. Vicente, in this way, stated that education must help form people who are, "Subjects of their own history, profoundly knowledgeable of their own reality and able to intervene in that reality". Marco again stated, "We have a concern with the education of the human being so that he can be...subject of his own history".

In contrast to VF, in which participation is principally a duty, and PS, in which it is principally a right, participation for the MST is both a right – in that it is a regaining of something taken away by oppression – and a duty – in that it is a necessary condition for the transformation of society. Yet more than either a right or a duty, it can be seen as the natural human state, a fulfilling of the 'ontological vocation' proposed by Freire.

### **Universality and difference**

The degree to which emphasis is placed on the sameness or alternatively the differences between citizens is a vital one. To some degree, the very notion of 'citizen' is universalist, in that it designates human beings in their role as members of a political community, and sharing some characteristics by virtue of their membership. Nevertheless, there are significant differences between approaches that see identity and the 'private' realm as irrelevant or even prejudicial and those which place a fainter boundary between public and private realms, seeing that it is impossible to dissociate the citizen from her features of personal identity and action in spheres such as the family.

Difference is here understood as relating either to individuals or to groups, and conceptions of citizenship can favour one or the other, both or neither. For example, liberal progressive approaches to primary schooling might pay attention to learning styles (individual difference) but not to the marginalisation of indigenous culture (group difference). An indigenous school might strongly promote local customs and knowledge (group difference) but treat all students in the same fashion (individual difference). It is also possible for some forms of group difference (e.g. gender) to be suppressed in the name of other forms of group difference (e.g. ethnicity).

The initiative that places most emphasis on difference in its varying forms is the PS. While there are universal entitlements, the differences between citizens in this initiative are not brushed aside. Instead of students adapting to school, school is seen to have to adjust to accommodate different forms of students. Inclusion is closely linked to the acknowledgement of difference in the view of the co-ordinator Kelly: "children learn in different ways, and it is their right to learn. So I think that the basic principle is inclusion". This orientation is seen in the approach to knowledge: instead of seeing learning as initiation into a universally valid knowledge, the PS adopts a constructivist view which allows local and individual understandings to be incorporated:

We seek to construct a school in accordance with the plurality of cultural experiences and the necessities of the learners, a school which recovers its condition as a time and space of socialisation, of lived experiences and construction of identities. (Barroso School)

There is an epistemological element to the initiative's recognition of difference:

...school as a space for the formation of active subjects and emancipated citizens must seek to implement a conception of knowledge that characterises itself by the plurality of its dimensions. (Baptista 1998: 4)

The PS places identity at the centre of its philosophy. Citizens are not here the abstract beings "stripped of all qualities save subjective rationality and morality" (Unterhalter, 1999: 102-103). What is needed, therefore, in the words of the document of the Barroso School conference, is an education:

that values human beings, that creates spaces for these beings in formation, to feel themselves an integral part of the process of construction of their knowledge and of their own identity.

Yet in addition to the focus on culture and identity generally, there is also a focus on specific groups which are seen to have been marginalised. It is recognised that even without formal discrimination against particular students, some are in practice excluded from the system by virtue of factors such as gender, race and socio-economic background. School often serves to exclude cultures and identities other than those of the 'norm', as discussed in the document of the municipal conference:

Our [i.e. traditional] school is not democratic and egalitarian. It sieves, excludes in the name of the logic of grades, of evaluation, of averages, of the uniformity that does not recognise differences of rhythm of learning, of class, of gender, of race, of culture. (SMED 2002: 1)

VF, on the other hand, does not see elements of individual and group identity as of significance for citizenship. The citizen in this initiative is understood to be the possessor of a set of rights protected by law, and a set of duties to respect the law, irrespective of differences. There is opposition to discrimination against particular groups or individuals, and every member of society is seen to be a valued participant in the political process. Yet there is no attempt to address the exclusion of particular groups by providing differential treatment: attention is focused on allowing individuals to assume and exercise their full set of rights and duties along with all the others.

The MST is more ambivalent in this respect. It is attentive to the existence of different groups in society, some of which have been historically marginalised. Most obviously, it addresses the group of landless rural workers, and their reassertion into the economic and political spheres. It also recognises the importance of identity in citizenship, particularly working class and landless people's identity formed from participation in the struggle. One important difference here is that the MST is working with a specific group – the *Sem Terras* (Landless), understood as part of the working class. The other two initiatives are for the general population (although the PS is largely directed at the poorest sections of society, in public schools).

The MST defends the right to a specific rural identity (and in so doing has been reluctant to join with other social movements to create a universal proposal for education in Brazil):

5. ...Teaching ...must prepare students to remain in and to transform the rural environment. 6. This is why we must work for a specific identity for the countryside schools, with a political and pedagogical orientation that strengthens new forms of countryside development, based in social justice, co-operative agriculture, respect for life and the valuing of rural culture.

(MST 2004: 26-27)

The movement also recognises the importance of culture: "We learn with history, that the cultural struggles are an important part of the processes of social transformation" (MST 1999b: 19). However, this is not just "a simple recovery of so-called popular culture, but principally to produce a new culture; a culture of change" (p.20). The MST appears to be distinct from the PS in that while the latter aims to include and value all cultures, the MST is proposing the creation of new particular forms of liberating culture.

The movement focuses strongly on the question of gender, as seen in the previous section. The state co-ordinator Maria Paula stated:

And in our courses when these spaces are divided and in our meetings also the percentage is more or less equal of participation between men and women.... This is a victory, it's something we've been fighting for years, and now it's becoming more concrete because you've got to build it up from the base.... It's very difficult because it's really rooted in, the woman has to stay at home, the man can but she can't.

Marco also commented:

...we also try to work with this question in schools. To respect differences, of participation for boys and girls in games, to try to demystify this issue that...is so strong in society, that women can do this and men can do that, that the woman isn't able, that the woman is weaker, that that man is stronger...

However, it might be argued that these efforts (and the much less energetic ones relating to race) are concerned with allowing all to reach a state of equality rather than allowing for the existence of distinct groups with their own identity within the movement.

Marco shows his opposition to universalising formal conceptions of citizenship in his statement: "What type of citizenship exists? School for everybody is for everybody but you don't see there the specificity, the reality of each community." Nilda also makes a strong statement in favour of working with difference:

In order to construct a collective it is necessary to take into account the individual differences of each person.... Difference is not inequality. Difference is part of the movement, each person has a process of knowledge. So each person's path needs to be respected....

On the other hand, there is a large degree of universality in the MST's conception. The movement's utopian vision is one of equality and solidarity, in which all work for the good of society as a whole. In this, and in the current struggle, the individual is to a large extent subordinated to the collective. Individual and group differences within the social movement therefore become secondary, and must not come in the way of the desired radical transformation of society. The notion of the collective is of great importance in the MST and is at the heart of the movement's vision of a new solidary society and the end of the current individualistic and fragmented one.

Speaking of those teachers who do not have a strong connection to the movement's vision, Vicente stated: "So those people without a very strong conception of this end up learning. They are dragged along by the force of the collective. That's why the collective is so important." Again, in relation to group identities, Vicente states that racial differences become less significant in the context of the collective:

...this question of discrimination by race, it ends up being more a secondary thing. It doesn't appear any more because within the camp, from the start...you have to create a collective, because everybody's in the same situation. Independently of being of Italian origin, of African origin, of German origin, everybody's in the same situation inside the camp.

However, he does qualify his remarks afterwards by stating: "Of course, if I was to tell you that racism doesn't exist...I'd be telling a lie".

The PS also has an explicit commitment to collective work in all its forms. The Barroso School document states:

The organisation through Age Cycles of Development created the conditions to overcome our condition of isolated workers and move towards establishing ourselves as collective producers....

In reality, this emphasis is directed primarily at teachers rather than students. Later it is again stated:

The challenge for the school consists, among other things, in administering work time in a more collective perspective. It's about constructing a school structured in increasingly horizontal relations....

However, unlike the MST, emphasis on the collective does not lead to a suppression of individual or group identities. The collective is more malleable and less transcendently important than in the MST. In the VF, on the other hand, there is very little reference to the idea of the collective at all. The primary relation is that between the individual and the state, and political participation is primarily individual.

### **The local, the national and the global**

None of the three initiatives are focused exclusively on the national level, as the former Moral and Civic Education was. As stated above, a clean break from the nationalist forms of citizenship in evidence in the dictatorship is seen to be desirable for all sides of the political spectrum. The initiative that most strongly focuses on the national level is VF. Since the focus here is on elections, the citizen is first and foremost seen to be that of the nation-state of Brazil within which she has voting rights. Some of these elections are, indeed, at a municipal or state, rather than national level, but still they occur within the framework of Brazilian citizenship. The TSE



document states that "the young voter needs to be made aware of its [the vote's] importance for determining the political directions of his or her country". The Yanomia programme reinforces this by stating the project's aims as: "to make pupils aware...of their responsibilities as regards the destiny of the nation". Drawing on the National Curriculum Parameters, the document also states that the pupils must be able to:

Know the fundamental characteristics of Brazil in its social, material and cultural dimensions as a means of progressively constructing the notion of national and personal identity and the feeling of belonging to the country.

However, there are some ways in which this initiative moves away from the national. Firstly, there is an international element to its understanding of rights, with reference made to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This international element is enhanced by the impetus given to the project by UNICEF, and previous experiences elsewhere such as Costa Rica. Secondly, there is a local element. Young people are encouraged to raise their awareness of issues in the local community and discuss means of resolving them. In some cases observed, this was focused on the school community, with the mock elections taking the form of voting for class representatives, who are responsible for improving school conditions.

The MST in this respect has a focus that is evenly spread over the three levels. While the movement is very critical of national political structures and social policy, there is all the same a strong consciousness of national citizenship. The movement is nationwide, active in all but four of the country's states, and has national co-ordinating bodies. The aims of the movement are also national, in that they are oriented around agrarian reform and other forms of social transformation in the country as a whole. There are even significant elements of patriotism in the MST. The poetic postscript to MST (1999a: 25) includes the line: "Whoever does not love the fatherland (*Pátria*), does not bring about the revolution embodied in the history of its people". This is a different notion of nation from that present in VF, which is one of polity and not of land, race or the people's struggle. The MST, however, also works within the framework of the Federal Constitution, pressurising the government to fulfil its constitutional obligations in relation to the redistribution of land.

Yet the local level is also strongly evident, principally through the attachment to the land, and interest in the affairs of the community. The work of Gelsa Knijnik (1996; 1998), who analyses

ethnomathematic work in communities of Rio Grande do Sul, is relevant here. The Treviso School document states that among the aims of education are “recovering their [the learners’] history and having an identity based on the countryside” (Treviso School 2001). This shows a clear contrast with forms of civic education that aim to base history and identity on the national context. The movement also has a strong interest in the global level, since many of the issues in which it has active political involvement – such as genetically modified crops and the liberalisation of trade – are themselves necessarily global. Caldart (2000) describes this historical change in the movement from the initial focus on the local level, then to national expansion and finally to a global perspective. In addition, the political education of the *assentados* and *acampados* involves the development of awareness that local and national issues can only be understood in the global context. MST (1999a: 30) advocates “developing an internationalist vision of the struggle”.

In the PS, on the other hand, there is little explicit reference to the spatial dimension of citizenship, either in the documents or the interviews. Most attention is paid to the local, including political issues involving the school and its surrounding community. An example of this was the mobilisation of students to obtain new school buildings from the participatory budget. The fact that the framework of the PS is promoted by a municipal government leads inevitably to some degree of local focus. In contrast, there is little emphasis on traditional national reference points, nor, in an explicit way, on developing global citizenship. Nevertheless, the approach to rights and to citizenship in general in this initiative is one in which justice necessarily extends beyond national borders, human beings having rights by virtue of their being human, and not by belonging to a particular state.

Movements away from nationalist conceptions of citizenship, therefore, have taken different forms in these initiatives: in the VF, a national focus, but one of polity, rather than other features of national identity; in the MST, an expanding conception moving up from the local, through the national, to the global; and lastly, in the PS, one based on local activism in the context of global rights.

## Conformity and criticality

All three initiatives are strongly in favour of developing critical attitudes, and oppose passive conformist forms of citizenship. This orientation is seen both in the official literature and the statements of teachers and co-ordinators. Yet the three are clearly distinct in the way they understand criticality and how it should be developed.

VF aims to form a critical citizen in the sense of one who is able to choose representatives effectively. She must critically evaluate different candidates, their policy proposals, and accompany that progress once they have been elected. The voter should avoid being duped by groundless promises or be persuaded by short-term gain (in its most extreme form, outright vote-buying). As in all three initiatives, there is emphasis on reading the media in a critical manner, as Antonio stated:

We don't know how to evaluate the news we receive.... of knowing how to put it in the balance and see and question oneself: is this really true? We don't have this, we need to create it.

In addition to this questioning of official information, Amanda also associated criticality with the questioning of values. The co-ordinator Edson also emphasised "stimulating the critical sense" of the pupils, particularly in relation to the skill of making choices. However, in terms of the knowledge needed for this, he proposed details of the Constitution and the functioning of the various levels of government in the country, rather than the counter-hegemonic views of critical pedagogy. Neutrality is constantly emphasised: "the objective of the programme is not to form opinion or party political affiliation" (Yanomía programme).

In this conception, citizens must conform to the laws of the country, but these are laws which can be changed, and which each citizen has a duty to evaluate. However, there are limits on the extent of this criticality. The citizen must be critical in choosing between different representatives, but the deeper structures of society are not called into question (this shows the similarities to the framework proposed by Bernard Crick). This can be seen as a *weak* form of criticality, as opposed to a *strong* one which would allow for alternative visions of society (McCowan 2006b). The criticality understood by VF is close to that of *critical thinking* (e.g. Ennis 1996; McPeck 1990; Paul 1993), that is, the development of rationality in relation to the

pronouncements of authority and the construction of one's own arguments, without favouring a particular political position.

The MST also places a strong emphasis on critical attitudes. The Salinas School plan of studies has critical citizenship as one of its aims, even for maths and science. Marco states that education must give people the ability "to ask, to question about the 'why' of life, the why of the world, the why of things". Nilda states that school "needs to form a critical subject who thinks, who has the capacity to make his or her own reading of reality and choice of life." Firstly, students are encouraged to be critical voters in the way proposed by VF. Yet in contrast to VF, the movement does indeed call into question the deeper societal structures, such as capitalism, current forms of liberal democracy, and the historical distribution of land, which it considers to be responsible for current inequalities. This is the "critical reading of society" that the Treviso School's politico-pedagogical plan sees as being suppressed by conventional schooling. A number of political issues to be covered are mentioned by Marco: "...the theme of GMOs and what they might cause, the impact on the environment and always the question of the foreign debt, the FTAA..."

In this way, the MST also engages with the Freirean practice of problematisation:

The educator [must] just be a problematiser that will facilitate for the learners, for the pupils, that is, as you like, a 'reading' of this reality. Also to make sure that from this, he ends up questioning here, the reality, the world, society. (Interview with Marco)

The MST approach to criticality, therefore, approximates most closely to the critical pedagogy framework, presenting a particular political position intended to challenge the hegemony. The PS, to some extent, also adheres to this vision.

However, as discussed in McCowan (2002; 2003) there is a tension here relating to the MST's existence as a social movement. Being a movement that is critical of the government, and under attack from the state and groups in society that are threatened by its activities, it must defend itself vigorously. In many cases, its own survival depends on a high degree of unity and common purpose, one which makes the development of critical attitudes difficult. While there is some critique of the movement from within itself, this is certainly a lower priority, and in some cases positively discouraged.

The framework of the PS makes some reference to the development of critical consciousness. The co-ordinator Kelly emphasised the shift from conformist to active, critical citizenship:

That tidy, respectable citizen...the state really had this model, this ideal of a man. And the Plural School... is exactly to favour, to stimulate the action and formation of the subject so that he can act in a different way in the public sphere, transforming what can be transformed and supporting and sustaining what is to be sustained.

Other respondents emphasised the importance of “being a person who questions” (Luciana). In Luciana’s case, interestingly, this criticality is seen to be developed through participation. A number of specific references to criticality, however, are in relation to the media and new technologies, as the Barroso School conference document states, proposing a school:

that might permit [pupils] to critically face up to the accelerated changes of current society, of information, of knowledge. That might help them to move with autonomy through this reality, without letting themselves be deceived...

Elsewhere in the same document, it is stated that schools:

must develop in pupils the capacity to take decisions based in reflection and dialogue, ...capacitating them to interpret phenomena and to act in a critical and responsible way in relation to social problems.

While these specific references are not frequent, the tenor of the official literature is one of critique of the traditions and dominant culture both of education and the wider society in which it is inserted. The whole proposal of the PS is a critique of current practice, and as such it shows support of critical attitudes.

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The three initiatives, therefore, while sharing use of concepts such as ‘citizenship’, ‘exclusion’, ‘rights’, ‘critical’ and ‘participation’, have distinct visions of society and the individual, and of the role of education in relation to them. The MST is characterised by a commitment to the

workers' struggle, in which education becomes part of the social movement for change. The PS sees society in terms of exclusion, and that the school must be transformed into an inclusive, participatory institution in terms of access, culture and the construction of knowledge. Lastly, VF rests on a belief in liberal democratic structures and legal rights, with education serving to capacitate the individual to participate effectively within this system. The main differences between the three initiatives in relation to the four issues discussed in this chapter are summarised in the table in Appendix 7.

This analysis has intended to juxtapose three distinct conceptions of citizenship and education, and not to determine which of these is the superior moral and political vision, nor the most coherent as a framework. In terms of coherence, all three have a core set of beliefs and some piecemeal elements owing to the specificities of their actors and the circumstances of their development. Of the three, the MST has the most explicit vision, due to the longer time it has been in existence and the volume of its literature, while the PS has the least explicit, since it is intended to emerge from the multiplicity of school experiences. The focus of the following chapters will be to observe how these differing conceptions materialise in pedagogical programmes and the challenges and obstacles they face in the process of implementation.

## Chapter 6

### Bridging the Gap between Ends and Means

A distinction is commonly made between the official, unofficial and hidden curricula (e.g. Kelly 2004). The 'official' curriculum is that which is prescribed by an authority and usually presented in written form. The 'unofficial' or 'taught' curriculum is that which the students actually come into contact with, the official curriculum undergoing various modifications due to local particularities, the idiosyncrasies of teachers, lack of resources, deliberate subversion and so forth. Lastly, the 'hidden' curriculum is that set of messages and norms that are not made explicit in the official curriculum, but that nevertheless form a significant part of the students' learning.

This chapter will assess something resembling the official curriculum, although with some important differences. Discussion of official and unofficial curricula usually takes place in the context of national education systems, with clearly identifiable and authoritative curriculum documents. In the case of the three initiatives – none of which is promoted by the central government – the equivalent of the official curriculum is rather looser in terms of its construction and less easy to identify. Instead of the official curriculum, therefore, this chapter will analyse the *ideal curricular programme* (corresponding to the second stage of curricular transposition). This is understood to mean the total set of educational means used to achieve the aims and aspiration set out in chapter 5 (the first stage). The analysis will be based principally on the official documents of each initiative (in each case, there are an array of relevant documents, rather than one unified curriculum statement), although interview material will also be drawn on in some cases. The unofficial curriculum – what actually happens in schools – will be discussed in the following chapter. This study will not analyse the hidden curriculum as such, although there is discussion of some elements normally bracketed under this heading – such as relations of power and school rituals – since they are highly relevant in the development of citizenship, and in some cases in the initiatives are in fact made explicit.

The ideal curricular programme consists of educational activities (e.g. a task to be completed in the classroom, a visit to a museum, a test) and ways of carrying out those activities (e.g. teaching methods, teacher-student relations, student participation in the construction of curriculum and so

forth). Both of these elements are significant in the students' development and their citizen learning. It is important to note that neither the MST or PS, which comprise complete curricula, have a single subject of 'citizenship education': the elements of citizenship learning are spread through the different academic areas and other educational activities. In addition, the initiatives cannot be seen in isolation from the existing school curriculum. As discussed in chapter 5, the conventional school is seen by two of the initiatives (MST, PS) as actively contributing to injustices in society. The educational response in these two cases, therefore, consists not just of the introduction of new elements and the insertion of a new initiative, but also the transformation of existing educational practice. However, there is not complete freedom of curriculum design in these cases, with some constraints of local and national policy. In VF, which does not aim for this transformation, the existing curriculum is the context in which its activities are carried out.

The last part of the chapter will discuss the relationship between the curricular programmes and the ideals underlying them, leading towards the exploration of the ends-means relationship in EFC, and the development of a theoretical framework for understanding the leap from the first to the second stages of curricular transposition.

## The curricular programme of the MST

An MST school is in some ways very like any other primary school in the country. The subjects studied, the length of the school day, the length of classes and the teaching materials are similar to a large extent. There are a number of reasons for this: the existence of the National Curricular Parameters; the location of the school within a municipal or state school network; the presence of teachers who have been trained within conventional school approaches; and, to a large degree, due to the force of habit, custom and tradition in the institution of school. Nevertheless, there are some significant elements that distinguish an MST school from any other. These stem from the rural environment in which the schools are located, from the dynamics of the social movement and from its specific political positions.

One distinctive element of the MST is that it lays out a series of *pedagogical principles*. These are a form of bridge between the political principles of the movement and the curricular activities



themselves. They exist as orientations rather than specific activities. The pedagogical principles are as follows:

1. Relation between practice and theory
2. Methodological combination between processes of teaching and skill-development
3. Reality as the base of the production of knowledge
4. Formative, socially useful content
5. Education for work and through work
6. Organic link between educative and political processes
7. Organic link between educative and economic processes
8. Organic link between education and culture
9. Democratic management
10. Self organisation of students
11. Creation of pedagogical collectives and ongoing teacher education
12. Attitudes and habits of research
13. Combination between collective and individual pedagogical processes

(MST 1999a: 24)

The curricular activities laid out in *How We Create the Primary School* are explicitly related to these pedagogical principles. They are seen to underlie the concretisation in each specific context.

The MST approach is that academic lessons should form only part of school life. According to MST (1999b), school time must be divided amongst the following activities: classes; work; workshops (e.g. art, cooking and financial administration); sport/leisure; study; collective tasks (*mutirão*); and collective pedagogical planning. Classroom time can be used for rituals, the discussion of news, memory, research, reading, collective planning and culture. Treviso School has the following distribution of school time for 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades:

- Theoretical time, 13 hours (Portuguese, maths, physical and biological sciences, foreign language, religious education, social sciences)
- Workshop time, 2 hours
- Leisure time, 3 hours (includes PE)
- Work time, 2 hours

As can be seen above, the MST does maintain the traditional subject areas in conjunction with non-academic activities, and importantly time for collective work. In addition, there are cross-disciplinary themes. These include the history of the MST and the settlement, the meaning of MST symbols and co-operative agriculture:

These can unfold into *generative themes*, transforming themselves into research and sensitisation for the popular knowledge of the community and awakening interest in practical interventions in the solution of local problems.

The axes or themes chosen in this case are co-operation; the relation of man (sic) and the environment; and socio-cultural relations. These themes are to be worked with in the classroom during the year.

However, while the MST does support inter-disciplinarity and generative themes, it stops short of abandoning subject disciplines altogether. According to MST (1999a), school should offer all the subjects contained in the core curriculum, as established by the State Education Councils. Within this, particular emphasis is given to humanities, particularly history (on account of the importance attached to memory, and the preservation of popular versions of events), philosophy, study of Spanish and agricultural studies.

Another way in which MST schools are fairly conventional is in the grade structure. MST (1999b) does make reference to 'cycles' as an alternative to the conventional grades (signifying a move away from repetition), yet there is not a strong recommendation for their use. Treviso School, for example, states that there should be automatic progression from grades 1-4, with extra help for those who are falling behind, but that from grade 5, students who do not achieve the minimum requirements will have to repeat the year. According to Horácio, deputy head of Salinas School, in practice there is very little repetition, but as yet there is no movement away from the notion of 'grade'.

However, despite these elements of 'conventionality', there are certain characteristics that mark the MST approach out significantly. The first of these is political education in the classroom. Politics and the political underlie all MST educational work. As stated in MST (1999a: 16-17):

Education is always a political practice, in that it inserts herself within a project of transformation or social conservation. But for a long time people tried to believe that education and politics should not mix. That politics was something for politicians and should not contaminate the minds and hearts of our children and young people. This is, in truth, an intentional and perverse attempt to alienate people, so that they think that nothing could be different in the society in which they live.

The political aims of the movement -- in relation to land reform and the wider class struggle -- are thereby to be brought within the walls of the classroom. MST (1999a: 6) states: "This is the horizon that defines education in the MST: a pedagogical proposal that acknowledges its political nature." In interview, the headteacher Ruth identified the difference between an MST school and other rural schools to be the "political option" made: according to her, despite having to work with the obligatory 'minimum content', the 'political option' colours the teaching methods and textbooks, the organisation of the school and lesson content.

One of the elements of political education in the classroom is discussion of news. This is described as:

A daily moment to awaken the necessity of information and a critical view of it. A space to recount what is happening in society and how the workers' struggle is going. It is a moment of socialisation of what the students are hearing through the mass media and for transmitting short accounts of the current situation. (MST 1999b: 41)

As seen in chapter 5, part of the MST struggle is against negative portrayals of the movement, and the values of individualism and consumerism promoted in the media in general. Students, therefore, must be encouraged to watch television in a critical manner.

The MST's intention is also to integrate the political into the conventional subject disciplines. Each school organises the political content of its curriculum as it sees fit, from the basis of the above principles. By way of an example, the history component of Salinas School for the 6<sup>th</sup> grade is as follows:

From the basis of the current Brazilian reality, search in the past for explanations for the happenings of the current time, awakening in the learners interest for the themes which allow them to situate and position themselves in Brazilian reality. The black community, oppression, women, concentration of land ownership and exploitation are the principal themes worked with in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

This passage shows clearly the political orientations of the MST's work, in seeing the historical roots of current inequalities and injustices, interpreting events in relation to the class struggle, and emphasising the efficacy of popular uprising. The link between historical understanding and struggle for justice in society is seen in this statement of the co-ordinator Nilda:

...it's a school that has a history of struggle, that was always working with this with the children, and beyond these children going to school to study, they have the task of getting to know the history of their land, of Brazil... If you were to look in history as to why school emerged, at times it is astounding.... I think this is the distinctive feature, to see school as one of the instruments to help in the struggle in society.

Children in MST schools are encouraged to critique accepted versions of history and the portrayal of current society transmitted by the media. To aid in this task, the movement has created its own history textbook (MST 2001), providing an account of the colonisation of Brazil, its development, and particularly the question of land from the perspective of the 'oppressed'.

Yet political education goes beyond lesson content. As stated in MST (1999a: 17):

An organic link between education and politics means making politics enter/cross the pedagogical processes which happen in schools, in training courses. It is much more, then, than discussing political questions.

The document continues:

To consider democracy a pedagogical principle means, according to our educational approach, that it is not enough for students to study or discuss it; it is

also necessary ... to experience a space of democratic participation, educating oneself through and for social democracy<sup>25</sup>. (MST 1999a: 20)

The movement is clearly distancing itself here from approaches to citizenship education based on the acquisition of knowledge, and even from skills-based approaches when these are disarticulated from real experiences of democracy. In this expanded conceptualisation, political education is seen to involve the following elements (p.17):

- Encouraging indignation at injustice
- Politico-ideological education (history, political economy etc)
- Participating in the workers' struggle
- Promoting the self-organisation of students
- Developing personal and collective criticality
- Becoming an activist of the movement

One element of the MST curricular programme that contributes to this broader political development is the *mística*. A distinctive aspect of the MST's approach to the formation of citizens is the importance it gives to the promotion of particular values associated with the identity of the *Sem Terra*. The movement takes a quasi-religious approach to its work, in keeping with its roots in the radical wings of the Catholic Church, the seminary education of some of its leaders and the continuing religious attachments of many of its members. Central to all MST activity is the *mística* (literally, mystic, or mystical), a term referring to all ceremonial activities which engage the heart and the imagination of those engaged in the struggle. Although not frequently mentioned in the school curriculum documents – which have to obtain state or municipal approval, and therefore tend to 'tone down' the radical elements – the *mística* has a prominent place in general MST educational literature.

The *mística* can range from a simple singing of the movement's anthem or waving of its flag, to elaborate ceremonies such as that commemorating the massacre of 19 landless in Eldorado dos Carajás, where participants representing each of the fallen rise one by one with the line, "present!". The existence of these forms of ritual is evidence of the movement's belief that

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<sup>25</sup> This phrase is not here used in the mixed-economy, welfare state sense of 'social democratic', but of democracy in a social setting.

political participation is not just a question of knowledge and skills, but that it requires the engagement of the heart and the formation of values:

The *mística* expresses itself through poetry, theatre, corporal expression, chants, music, song, MST symbols, work tools, the recovery of memory of the struggles and all the great people who have struggled for humanity. It becomes a celebration and aims to involve all those present in a single movement, to experience a single feeling, to feel themselves members of a collective identity...which goes beyond themselves and beyond the MST. (MST 1999b: 23)

The *mística*, therefore, is intended to galvanise the members of the movement in united action, spurred on by images of the future (the goals of land reform, justice, socialist society) and of the past (previous struggles, MST martyrs and revered figures). It is also key to galvanising the *Sem Terra* identity, which in turn leads to the development of the political consciousness for participation in the working class struggle.

Another key element is collective work. For the MST, work is not an irksome burden to be endured while waiting for leisure time, but something to be valued. The citizen, therefore, is a worker, there not being a strong separation between one's identity engaged in production and as a political being. There are two ways in which work is to be incorporated in the school curriculum: firstly, by equipping students for employment (that is, productive self-owned labour), and secondly by including work as an educational method (MST 1999a: 16). School, therefore, is not just a preparation for competitive selling of one's labour on the job market, but a time in which work is undertaken and enjoyed, constituting a valuable learning experience.

Schools are encouraged to organise work-related activities within school hours. In MST (1999b), this is to be achieved via *activity groups*, while in Treviso School, they are called *work teams*. All students must belong to a group, and each group should have approximately five members. Students are supposed to organise their own activities as far as is possible, electing a co-ordinator from within the group. Suggested activities include: cleaning, handing out school meals, preparing the *mística*, decoration, "participating actively in civic moments" and reading and debating the *Jornal Sem Terra* (Landless Newspaper) (MST 1999b: 15). In Treviso School, the tasks of the work groups are organised in five areas: tending the vegetable garden; cleaning;

beautifying the local environment; ornamentation and communication (includes promoting identity and values, as well as cultural issues); and crop and tree planting.

One key aspect of MST education is the need to make schooling relevant to the rural population. This involves developing knowledge and skills relating to agricultural work, but also building pride in rural culture in the context of the predominantly urban values promoted by the media. An example of new approaches to knowledge is the ethnomathematics described by Knijnik (1996; 1998), in which local calculation methods – such as those of land area and the weight of agricultural produce – are integrated into the curriculum. A number of schools work with *alternância*, a system in which the periods of time students spend in school are interspersed with periods working in the fields. This serves both educational and pragmatic functions: the former, because of the importance of implementing in practice the academic knowledge gained in school, and the latter, because families very often require the participation of the young in the agricultural work.

The work undertaken both inside and outside school serves to foster in the students positive rural values and identity, and for them to gain skills and knowledge in agricultural techniques. Drawing on the *pedagogy of co-operation*, it also serves:

[T]o break the individualist culture in which we are submerged, through new relations of work, through dividing tasks and thinking of the welfare of all the families, and not everyone for him or herself. (MST 1999b: 7)

This emphasis is in stark contrast to the competitive culture of school assessment (as yet underdeveloped in Brazil in relation to the UK and USA, but becoming increasingly prominent), which pits individual against individual in academic pursuits.

The emphasis on the collective is also seen in the notion of dialogue. In the Freirean sense, this involves a radical alteration of the relations between teacher and student, and of the process of knowledge construction and acquisition. It forms one of the non-negotiable pedagogical principles on which MST educational activities are built. The Freirean influences in MST pedagogy can be seen in the following statement:

From our pedagogical practices we could verify the truth of the principle that says: no one learns through somebody else, but also nobody is educated alone.... That is to say that is not only the teacher-student relationship which educates: it is also the relationship between students and between teachers.... Everybody learning and teaching amongst themselves.... The collective educates the collective. (MST 1999a: 23)

Elsewhere in the Salinas *regimento* it is stated that:

Research and not learning for repetition is emphasised, aiming for the collective construction of knowledge and encouraging the student to learn to find solutions and make new discoveries. Dialogue makes viable the participation of the students in the school and in the struggle for a dignified life, building their identity, as well as knowledge.

However, as is made clear by the following statement, traditional 'chalk and talk' is not banished altogether:

We have nothing against expository lessons. They also must be present in our school. What we want to emphasise is the necessity of the greatest involvement of students in the production of knowledge. (MST 1999b: 42)

As well as the interaction between teacher and student, knowledge production must take the here and now as its base. This relates to the efforts to integrate the local knowledge of the community and of the rural population with academic school knowledge. Ruth described this as "the educators taking from the community the raw materials for the working in the classroom".

Assessment is also supposed to be undertaken in a dialogical manner. MST (1999b: 30) states:

Thus evaluation is a constant, participatory and democratic process. It includes all the moments of the educative process, involving all the subjects taking part in this process (students, educators, community...) within each space for discussion (activity groups, class councils, class assemblies, educators' assemblies, school



assemblies,...) allowing everybody to be evaluated, to self-evaluate and to evaluate themselves collectively.

A dialogical approach makes relevant the physical environment as well as teacher-student relations. In terms of the classroom space, MST (1999b) recommends varying the conventional format, with tables in semicircles or arranged for group work. It also recommends putting up educational wall displays, particularly in the early grades. Importantly, it states that classes can be given outside the classroom, such as doing nature trails, collecting data on agricultural production in the community, and doing scientific experiments.

The MST, therefore, proposes a pedagogy that is social constructivist (in a way that is common to most progressive education in Brazil), but that goes beyond this to link horizontal teacher-student relations in a Freirean manner to democratic relations and freedom from oppression in the wider society. With dialogue, as with the previous aspects of work and *mística*, the overriding principle is the overcoming of fragmentation, and the joining of individuals in mutually supportive collectives.

Participatory organisation of schools is also a key tenet of the MST:

The big and even the little activities of day-to-day life in the school must be planned collectively.... Where the planning is concentrated in a few heads (from top to bottom) there is no democracy.... (MST 1995: 8)

In MST education, students must organise their own affairs, firstly because it is their right to have a say in their own education, and secondly because it is a valuable learning experience. The citizen abilities of political organisation and participation are thus acquired through participation in these activities in school. The most radical examples of this are seen in the MST teacher education courses (Caldart 1997), but it is also a backbone of primary education.

Students' organisation must be seen as part of an approach to management and curriculum construction which involves all members of the school and the local community. Although these features depend on municipal or state legislation, MST schools ideally have election of headteachers and a school council, with student participation in both. The latter is the highest

body of management<sup>26</sup>, with responsibilities for financial resources, the school calendar, accountability, elaboration of the PPP and *regimento* together with the school community, and guaranteeing the responsiveness of the council to the wishes of all members of the community. In Salinas School, students, teachers, non-teaching staff and senior management are supposed to have time set aside each week for collective evaluations, which are then sent to the general assembly for ratification. Students within their classes are encouraged to organise class councils, assemblies, establish classroom rules, evaluate the educational process, propose voluntary work and debate the directions of the school.

Ruth stated:

Our class councils are participatory: parents, students, teachers and senior management all participate.... So this is the moment where the students can make their evaluation of the educational process of the school, of its performance.

Students are also intended to organise themselves within their work teams, as discussed above.

However, there is another form of active political development aside from these instances of self-organisation. The MST is emphatic that 'education' cannot be confined to schools:

But it is good to bear in mind that the pedagogy which forms new social subjects, and which educates human beings, goes beyond the school. It is much bigger and involves life as a whole. Some educational processes which sustain the Landless identity could never be realised within the school. (MST 1999b: 6)

Part of this concerns community outreach and volunteering. MST (1999b) recommends a number of ways in which students should make contact with the community via the school: including organising cultural activities and contributing to the preservation of community history; organising a community radio or newspaper; organising a postal service; protecting the environment; and making constructive use of rubbish. The document also proposes visits to other settlements, camps, schools, co-operatives and historical sites (MST 1999b: 43). In addition,

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<sup>26</sup> There are also parent-teacher associations (*Círculos de Pais e Mestres*) which have an important administrative role in some schools.

Treviso School proposes the organisation of 'pedagogical camps', "to recover the history of the families and continue the discussions about this school we want".

However, the MST is distinctive in its encouragement not just of community involvement but also political activity at local and national levels. Examples of this form of activity are participation in the occupation of land and establishment of camps, other forms of occupation such as of public buildings, and participation in protest marches.

The presence of these activities, and the participation of students in MST mobilisations, are justified by the need to "provide students with the means to widen their horizons, thereby allowing a different reading of their own reality" (MST 1999b: 43). In view of the importance of activities conducted outside the school, MST (1999b) urges schools to organise themselves in such a way that students are not disadvantaged through possible absences, and that the experiences are shared with the other students. There are also regional and national meetings for landless children and young people.

In summary, the MST curricular programme is characterised by attempts to modify the nature of schooling, while maintaining a conventional school format within the state system. It does this by integrating political content into lessons (relating to land reform and the wider social struggles), diversifying school activities to include co-operative work and movement rituals, transforming teacher-student relations and structures of management, and encouraging political activities outside the school. There is a strong connection between the school and the wider struggles for justice in society.

## The Curricular Programme of the Plural School

The PS represents an attempt to radically alter the nature of schooling. It sees society as being characterised by the exclusion of certain segments of the population from valued arenas, and that school has a key role in the maintenance of that exclusion. To ensure the full citizenship of all members of society, therefore, school must be made inclusive, and must function in a way that will allow all students to participate beyond the school walls. The transformation that the PS intends for the school is to be deep and comprehensive:

Changing the vision of the curriculum does not imply just changing the contents and programmes, but thinking of a new 'school knowledge' and 'school culture' in a wider way. (SMED 2002: 45)

The best-known feature of the PS, and in many ways the most controversial, is the policy of *formation cycles*. These are a means of combating the chronic levels of repetition among certain social groups, ensuring that students progress together as an age group. The 'cycles' solution is one that has been attempted elsewhere in Brazil, and in other countries such as France and Greece (Mainardes 2004). Primary school in Brazil is normally of eight years, the first four of these resembling a customary primary format, with single class teachers and faint subject distinctions, while the next four are similar to lower secondary with separate subject teachers. The PS in contrast proposes three 'basic cycles':

1. Childhood, ages 6-9
2. Pre-adolescence, ages 9-12
3. Adolescence, ages 12-15

In each of these, the curriculum is intended to address the specific elements of human development for the age group. Instead of repetition for all those who fail the end-of-year exam, students progress with their peer group, but if needs be spend a single extra year in the cycle. The PS does try to make other provision in conjunction with the cycles, to provide extra support for those who are falling behind their peers and those with special educational needs.

Attention to the grade structures is part of a wider concern for 'school time'. In the view of the initiative, the rigid structuring of time of the 'traditional' school needs to be rethought. As stated in SMED (2002: 20), in the PS, "school time is organised in 'fluxes' that are more flexible, longer and more attentive to the multiple dimensions of development of socio-cultural subjects". This stems from the underlying ideas of the framework, namely, "the logic of the formation of balanced identities, of the lived experience of culture and the appropriate socialisation for each homogeneous age of formation" (p.20). The approach is opposed to attachment to "average rhythms", acknowledging "the diversity of cultural rhythms of pupils, their socio-cultural conditions, the diversity of processes of socialisation, the differences of gender, race, social class...." (SMED 2002: 18).

The PS sees knowledge and its structuring in school as linked to social control. In order to liberate citizens, therefore, it is necessary to transform the knowledge that is within schools. Questions of knowledge are more prominent in the PS than in the other two initiatives (particularly more so than the VF, where there is no epistemological discussion). For example, there are a number of instances in the documents where dependence on text books is critiqued, since they are seen to respond to the needs of the editorial market and not those of the school community (e.g. SMED 2002: 65-66).

The approach is based on a clearly stated epistemology of “knowledge as fruit of a process of interaction between subject and object” (SMED 2002: 25). However, while the framework rejects traditional transmission models, it does not go to the extremes of constructivism, and particularly avoids pragmatist approaches:

If we choose the disciplines as the vertebral access of content, we fall into an authoritarian conception that there exists an absolute and neutral knowledge which must be presented to the pupils, independently of the context in which the educational process occurs.

On the other hand, if we devalue the importance of scientific knowledge for the transformation of reality, we run the risk of falling into pragmatism, and an excessively spontaneous vision of reality, neglecting its historical dimension. (SMED 2002: 27)

This approach – termed ‘social interactionist constructivist’ by the deputy head Dora – has clear implications for classroom learning:

According to this position, all knowledge is constructed in a close relationship with the contexts in which it is used, being for this reason, impossible to separate the cognitive, emotional and social aspects present in the process. (SMED 2002: 26)

Students, according to this view, necessarily have a role in the construction of knowledge, and must not be treated as passive recipients of pre-defined content. School must equip students “with the capacity to reconstruct the knowledge accumulated by humanity up to the present” (Barroso

School 2004: 8). This marks the PS out from more simplistic notions of exclusion, based solely on initial access to arenas such as the school. Learning must also be *active*, in the sense of focusing on practice and use of knowledge for intervening in the world, and must involve corporal and manual, as well as cerebral, activities (SMED 2002: 26).

The epistemological position adopted necessarily highlights those aspects referred to by Bernstein (1971) as *classification* and *framing*, particularly the former, relating to the boundaries between academic disciplines. Like many 'progressive' approaches there are moves away from traditional subject divisions and towards an integrated curriculum. There are two main ways in which this is achieved. Firstly through the *transversal themes*, which fulfil a function similar to those in the National Curricular Parameters. As discussed in chapter 4, none of these transversal themes are directly related to democratic processes, although they are political in implication. While SMED proposal gives suggestions for the themes, they are not stipulated, and are intended to be developed by individual schools on the basis of the needs of the community:

The proposal is that this curriculum should be constructed from the basis of a collective definition of the themes that represent the problems put forward by the current situation, not in parallel to the curriculum subjects, but transversal to them.... (SMED 2002: 27-28)

This forms part of an attempt to bridge the gap between remote academic lessons and the needs of the local community, reconciling "popular culture" and "historically accumulated knowledge" (SMED 2002: 67).

Another means of weakening classification is the use of projects. These involve the students conducting their own independent research, consisting of three stages – problem-posing, development and synthesis. An example is given in SMED (2002: 31) of a project on children's toys, dealing with theme of advertisements (part of the transversal theme of consumer issues). The project is intended to develop critical attitudes to the media, awareness of advertising directed at children, the propagation of stereotypes and consumerism.

Related to the challenging of subject boundaries and control of knowledge is the emphasis on Freirean dialogue (seen previously in the MST) leading to "increasingly horizontalised relations"

being established (Barroso School). Instead of the teacher's knowledge being focused exclusively on the discipline, it is here essential also to have a knowledge of the students:

[B]eyond the disciplinary contents, the process must also involve getting to know the pupils, their previous experiences, their concerns, their ways of representing reality. (SMED 2002: 64)

Later it is stated:

He [sic, the teacher] is no longer the one who just provides stimulation, but who will work from the basis of the previous experiences of the child, aiming, through reflexive activities, to enable the child to surpass him or herself in each moment. (p.66)

As stated above, teachers must begin to think from the starting point of the child, not the discipline they have specialised in. This requires a profound knowledge of each of the individual students as well as awareness of the social context and the communities they come from. This reflects Freirean ideas of educators carrying out research on the local community before embarking on literacy projects. The initiative makes few demands on students in this relationship: this is presumably because it is aiming to correct an imbalance in the conventional school, in which students were held entirely responsible for their own performance and in which teachers were not required to adapt their work to the differing needs. Yet the documents do not only call on teachers to ensure a more active role for students: the former must also develop a new sense of their own agency. They are to be:

agents, real subjects of their own pedagogical action as programmers, producers of alternative pedagogical materials, researchers of their own work, as inquirers who in every moment problematise their practice and deepen their theoretical reference points. (SMED 2002: 66)

With both students and teachers as empowered agents, a new relationship is established on the basis of *dialogue*, a relationship of mutual respect and the joint construction of knowledge:

It is necessary that a dialogical relationship is established in the classroom, where all can put ideas forward, ask, exchange, negotiate meanings, share. It is necessary to break with the monological pedagogy in which only the teacher speaks.... (p.66)

Dora, deputy head of Barroso School, related dialogue to citizenship:

We bring these pupils to question, to take positions, to give opinions, moreover we teach the mechanisms to achieve something, we are exercising through this the right to citizenship.

Assessment is also an important area. As well as the fundamental reform represented by the formation cycles, discussed above, the PS involves a wider rethinking of the notion. As stated in SMED (2002: 40):

[T]he instruments of evaluation, however varied they may be, must reflect the philosophy of the Plural School, being an expression of a pedagogical relationship based on dialogue and the collective search for solutions. In this way, the evaluative process ceases to be an instrument of sanction, becoming an instrument of the construction of a more plural educative process.

For this end, there is a reconsideration of the questions “what”, “why”, “who”, “when” and “how” in relation to assessment. In relation to the first of these, the assessment process must be widened from a focus on “the pupil and his/her cognitive performance” to include “the socialising and cultural function of education, the formation of identities, values and ethics”. In addition, other aspects of the school must also be evaluated, such as “the intervention of the teacher, the curriculum project of the school, the organisation of school time... in short, its political-pedagogical plan” (p.36). The function of assessment is now a diagnostic and formative one, rather than one of approval, and should adopt various forms rather than rely on tests.

The participation of students in their own assessment is seen to have an educative role:



If we want to construct autonomous subjects, it is necessary that the pupil exercises this autonomy from the basis of a reflection on his/her process of learning and socialisation. (SMED 2002: 39)

The element of the collective is also strongly present in the approach to assessment, which “must be collective and continuous” and “...never left to the criteria of a single teacher. It will be a decision pondered by the work team as a whole” (p.22). A controversial outcome of these transformed conceptualisations of assessment is the introduction of evaluation of teachers by students.

As in the MST, therefore, there are elements of liberal-progressive approaches, placing the learner, rather than the teacher or the subject-matter, at the centre of the educational process, but beyond this, there are more radical notions of democracy emerging from the work of Paulo Freire. However, as a whole, the PS does not have as ‘political’ a conception of dialogue as the MST: the emphasis is on the mutual construction of knowledge rather than the creation of collective consciousness for the political struggle.

Participatory decision-making in school is also a key element. The importance of participation in the PS framework is shown by the following statement:

[A]ll [the politico-pedagogical plans] propose the development of the citizen for participation in society. All these proposals note that school will develop these collective subjects in as far as they make them participants in the construction of humanised school spaces. (SMED 2002: 15)

The fact that the development of citizenship involves more than classroom activities was emphasised by Dora:

I think that it allows us every possibility for working with the question of citizenship. First because it requires a democratic school and a school which can and must create opportunities so that children can acquire this notion of what citizenship is.

What is required, therefore, is both a school that embodies the democratic principles it aims to promote, and one that provides particular opportunities for citizenship learning. The coordinator

Luciana made a clear link between curriculum content and the structures and character of the school:

...we have some disciplines, some contents that have a great possibility, if we think of philosophy, sociology, history itself, geography, I mean, the area of the humanities, does it empower? Of course it does. In the end they are areas where the work basically can end in a more political discussion. But now, what can be done...for people to incorporate that into their practice, their worldview?.... You make this concrete by that person being there...questioning, participating.

In the PS, the determination of the aims of the school ceases to be a decision of the central municipal government and becomes a process that is owned and conducted by the different parts of the school community: teachers, non-teaching staff, students and parents.

A number of participatory structures are present, some of which are the same as those seen in the context of the MST, since they form part of the wave of democratic reforms in Brazil since the 1980s discussed in chapter 4. The school assembly, with the participation of the whole school community, has the function of discussing general school issues, while the smaller school council, with teacher, student and community representatives, has a more executive role. Direct elections for headteachers are also universal in the municipal system, aiming to make school leadership more responsive to local needs and political demands. While not a policy specific to the PS (being adopted in a number of progressive municipalities and states throughout the country) it is one that is highly consistent with the initiative's aims. This participation is primarily a right of those groups involved to have a say in matters that affect them, but it is also seen as a learning experience.

It is necessary to continue calling the pupils to participation. Participation as an integral part of the school community, with co-responsibility, commitment and interaction between the different instances of the segments involved in democratic management, through the incentive to the creation and integration of *grêmios*, newspapers, radios and pupil assemblies.... (Barroso School conference document)

The *grêmios* are pupil associations, elected by the pupils themselves, which organise cultural, sporting and political activities in the school and act as a forum for pupil discussion and a vehicle

for representing student views. These are not specifically part of the PS framework, and have a long history in Brazilian schools, yet the municipal government has aimed to give impetus to them, and importantly to change their nature, so that they move away from being mere organisers of sports days and parties and become an effective force for the development of active citizenship among the student body. An official in the SMED, Darcy, had the specific role of supporting this change in the student bodies, and organised a number of meetings and workshops for students so as to raise awareness of and strengthen the associations. His particular concern was to create a space for independent student politics, free from the manipulation of adult political parties. The SMED were also trying to set up a youth participatory project, through which students could decide on the allocation of up to 30% of the school budget.

As in the MST, the collective is an ever-present notion: "In the school as a whole, it is indispensable to have collective work, in which teachers of different cycles, of different classes are together, discussing, reflecting..." (SMED 2002: 66). For students there must be opportunities for "interaction between learners in a truly group experience, where they can adopt different roles..." SMED (2002) sees the creation of the PPPs of each school as fundamental to the development of collective work. According to the Barroso School document the formation cycles are also a means of bringing more collective work to the educational process.

A final key element is the creation of inclusive classrooms. The concern of the PS for social exclusion relates primarily to socio-economic factors – to the poorest in society, many of whom live in *favelas*, and who have traditionally been unable to attend school. There is also significant focus on the issue of race, particularly the discrimination and exclusion of the Afro-descendant population. Luciana speaks of the importance, when addressing race, of fully implementing the Law 10639 (which makes obligatory the treatment of Afro-descendant culture and history in schools) going beyond the celebration of Zumbi<sup>27</sup> day and the 13<sup>th</sup> of May (the abolition of slavery), and look more deeply into the devaluing of African culture and the contribution of Afro-descendants to the country's development. To a lesser extent, there is also concern with issues of gender (e.g. SMED 2002: 56). However, an area which stands out in the programme of the PS is the emphasis on inclusion of those with special needs and disabilities. This is pioneering work in Brazil, where these students often attend special schools or receive no education at all.

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<sup>27</sup> Zumbi was the leader of the escaped slave's republic, Palmares, in colonial times and as such is a symbol of Black resistance to oppression.

The PS framework aims to respond to the existence of students with special needs, firstly, by including them within the mainstream classroom, and, secondly, by making special provision for their learning. Conventional schooling is criticised for its failure to provide for these students, and, when there is provision, for confusing “education, rehabilitation and therapy” (SMED 2002: 69). While students with special needs are to attend the same institutions, and as far as possible the same classrooms,

[They] should not have the same curriculum as those of ‘ordinary classes’, but the school should guarantee that they start their work from the basis of the effective conditions that the individual presents. Pedagogical work with pupils with special needs, from this perspective, aims to overcome existing barriers. (SMED 2002: 69)

LIBRAS (Brazilian sign language) translators are employed in classrooms so that deaf students are able to accompany the lesson within the same classroom. The municipality runs a Centre for Pedagogical Support for the Visually Impaired as well as a computer programme to give blind and visually impaired students access to IT. There is also pedagogical support for students considered to have behaviour problems (Barroso School 2004: 26). In contrast, while the MST (1999b: 39) states that the school should be open to those with special needs, it does not state specifically how this might take place.

The development of citizenship requires firstly that the rights of people with special needs are upheld, allowing them access to education of quality, and secondly by providing learning opportunities for other students, through coming into contact with people who are ‘different’, and who are normally segregated. In ways that reflect the ideas of Guttman (1987), therefore, there are efforts to provide opportunities for students to develop through their contact with fellow students. SMED (2002: 67) proposes the following objective:

To offer to the pupils the conditions and possibilities for living together in plurality, considering the differences between races, classes and gender, developing attitudes of respect and mutual consideration.

This is related to the question of identity: since the PS sees identity as a central part of citizenship, it provides certain types of educational provision that would not be necessary in the VF, for example, where citizenship is seen as a legal status. As stated in SMED (2002: 65):

we must think of objectives from which there might be conditions and possibilities for each pupil to construct and reconstruct his/her socio-cultural identity without ruptures and discontinuities, being an interactive subject with the right to express him/herself and to put forward his/her knowledge and experiences of the world.

Finally, in addition to the five key elements outlined above, other elements of interest in the PS framework are the school trips and other events organised by the Nucleus of the City and the Environment in the SMED. The aim of these is to give working-class students access to cultural arenas that are normally denied to them, such as theatres and museums, as well as partaking in research projects. The connection between these school outings and the PS framework is conceptualised by Julia through the idea of “the school beyond its own walls. Turning the spaces of the city also into educational spaces”. It is also intended to inspire the students to critical reflection over public spaces and their function. Political action should also extend outside the school:

[E]ducational institutions should enable a process of collective participation, producing concrete examples of democratic actions which go beyond their walls, which reach out, profoundly and visibly, intervening in an effective way in the formation of citizenship. (Barroso School)

In summary, some of the elements of the PS curriculum programme are similar to those of the MST. Both, with strong Freirean influence, aim to introduce dialogue in the classroom, to install participatory structures so that students and the community are involved in decision-making, and to integrate local and an academic knowledge. Both see citizenship as depending on both the ‘content’ of education, and its ‘form’, i.e. the relations are structures through which it is delivered. Distinctive features of the PS, however, are that there is a more concerted attempt to transform school ‘spaces’ and ‘times’, changing the grade system and subject disciplines. There are also more concrete steps to include all types of students in the same classroom, and pay attention to their particular attributes. For the PS, these changes to the nature of schooling are fundamental for bringing a change in the nature of society, with citizenship emerging naturally when exclusion has been overcome. However, there is much less emphasis than in the MST on the development of political knowledge, skills and values which will enable current and future political action and participation.

## The Curricular programme of Voter of the Future

VF is different from the other two initiatives in that it is not a full curricular framework, consisting of particular activities run in schools at specific periods of the year. It therefore inserts himself into an existing school curriculum, rather than aiming to transform it.

*Learning to Be a Citizen* proposes the following activities:

- Classes, lectures and seminars
- Visits to the legislative chambers, the judiciary and other organs of public administration
- Other participatory forms developed in the community: essay, poetry, music and drawing competitions; presentations of drama and dance; demonstrations, campaigns, mobilisations, treasure hunts, games and marches.

In addition to these, the mock election constitutes another key activity in the programme. While this booklet is used nationally, different programmes have been adopted in each state. Yanomia has chosen activities similar to those above, namely: pedagogical workshops; production of texts drama and posters; elections for class representative; and debates with the (real) candidates for election.

According to the TSE programme, the “classes, lectures and seminars” can be delivered by schoolteachers, officials of the TREs, or child and youth judges, and can address issues of “citizenship, rights, duties and the fundamental guarantees of the individual in society, using, for this, the Federal Constitution, the electoral code, electoral law and the Statute of the Child and Adolescent”.

The VF literature very rarely makes reference to pedagogical teaching methods. Yet in the Letoria programme there is a brief statement on the way these classes should be carried out:

The methodology will consist of interactive classes and/or lectures, with distribution of specific texts and utilisation of audiovisual resources. The lectures will be delivered in the schools themselves.

The element of 'interactive' methods shows a pedagogical commitment to engaging the learner, but clearly falls short of the Freirean dialogue of the other two initiatives, aiming for a more profound reassessment of the teacher-student relationship. In addition to lectures, the *Learning to Be a Citizen* outlines four possible workshops to be conducted with children in schools, focusing on practices of citizenship, citizen rights, election campaigns and voting. Students here are allowed the freedom to develop their conceptions of citizenship by drawing on their own experience, although ultimately they are to be 'corrected' by the legal definitions. There is no evidence of the *problematization* of knowledge and interpretations of society seen in the other two initiatives.

Teachers are encouraged to integrate elements of the programme into their day-to-day classes. Some teaching materials have been developed for this end. For example, in Seconia a storybook modelled on *A Christmas Carol* is used in which a boy has a vision of a bleak future society brought about by a lack of citizen action. Through the book, he learns about the Brazilian Constitution and the ways active citizenship can make a better society. The values of democracy are also to be taught through a short documentary made by the TSE, entitled *The People and Power*. The documentary charts the history of democratic elections in Brazil, decries the abuses of the system in previous ages, and shows the advantages of the current electronic voting system.

However, more than lectures, workshops and classroom sessions the activity that most characterises the programme is the mock election. Interestingly, this is not included in the initial statement of activities in *Learning to Be a Citizen*, although it is included as one of the workshops.<sup>28</sup> These elections can be carried out in a number of ways. The form emphasised in the official literature is that of election of imaginary political parties, based around forms of rights, namely:

- Life and health
- Liberty, respect and dignity
- Sport and leisure
- Public security and combating violence
- Education, vocational training and culture<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> The TSE document does, however, include it, along with classes, lectures and seminars.

<sup>29</sup> In the Yanomia project for 2006, these appear in a slightly different form: health, education, security, employment, basic sanitation, roads, electric energy, running water and leisure.

In Seconia, the mock election is intended to take place as follows:

The pupils will organise themselves in parties and will defend their public policy through campaigns, within and outside the school, through drama, music, marches, among other things, in interdisciplinary work.

At the end of the year, on a day to be confirmed, there will be an election of the parties of public policy, using the voting machines. On the day of election there will be a counting of the votes and the immediate announcement of the winning party.

In Minas School in Yanomia, the election for pupil representatives involves the following stages: training of the candidates, the electoral campaign (publicity and debate); presentation of proposals and projects; and election using the voting machines. In Amazonas School, a formal debate between the different candidates was part of the election process. Importantly, a few of those involved in the project have the chance to participate not only as voters but also as candidates, preparing and delivering a political campaign, developing proposals, and implementing them once elected. Some schools in the MST and PS also hold elections for class representatives, but the process of election is not highlighted as a key moment of political development as it is here.

The project for the mock election of public policy parties in Yanomia also had a rationale beyond the individual development of the students: the results of the election were to be disseminated to policymakers and politicians, showing the concerns and opinions of young people on issues such as education, health and environment.

Competitions are another form of activity in the VF programme. These, according to *Learning to Be a Citizen*, are to be conducted through the community, although in the state programmes they are normally organised via schools. Poetry, music and art competitions are intended to develop skills of creative expression and communication. However, most common are essay writing competitions, on topics such as, "My future is the vote", "The vote and your citizenship", "I won't sell my future", and "I am citizenship". In the Yanomia document it states that the winners will



be selected to act as multipliers for the process of dissemination of the electronic vote, oriented by officials of the TRE.

Another important activity in the programme is the organisation of visits to public institutions, the two most common destinations being the municipal legislative chamber and the TRE itself. In some cases, the visit includes some form of debate. The Yanomia document recommends:

Promoting debates, in the period permitted by law, amongst the candidates for the highest office of the respective municipality, for the schools participating in the project and the public in general. The schools will be invited to request the children and adolescents to carry out work based on the debate.

The last sentence of this passage, referring to follow up work back in school, shows an important link made between the two sites, and a valuing of reflection on the experience out of school.

Another activity conducted outside the school is the training of the voting officials in the TREs. This fulfils an important technical function in relation to the running of the mock election, but also provides an educational experience for the students involved. In terms of activities outside the school, there is not, however, any reference to volunteering work in the local community or as part of regional, national or international organisations. In contrast to the MST, nor is there reference to active political participation of the young people, aside from the initial statement concerning "demonstrations, campaigns, mobilisations, and marches" (TSE 2003: 5). (There is no mention of these elements elsewhere in the programme).

In summary, the curricular programme of VF is clearly different from that of the MST or PS in that it contains very little reference to structures or relations. This does not mean that they are not present and important, only that they do not form an explicit part of the curriculum programme. The lack of attention to these elements is likely to mean that the 'conventional' structures and relations of school will predominate. In addition, almost nothing said in the documents about teaching methods or pedagogy: this is significant in itself. Again, this may be because they are considered to be less important than the knowledge and skill content of the activities, or because the implementation of these activities is seen to be a straightforward affair.

## Assessing the ends-means relationship

The three initiatives display a variety of educational activities, both inside and outside the classroom, and coloured by differing approaches to knowledge, teaching and management. These curricular programmes represent the means by which the individual and societal goals outlined in chapter 5 are to be realised. The fact that the three initiatives are different in the types of educational activities chosen to promote citizenship, perhaps, is hardly surprising given the differing worldviews outlined in chapter 5. Yet is the relationship between the worldviews and the activities the same in each case? On what basis are these means chosen? Do the means emerge obviously and unproblematically from the ends? These questions highlight the need to understand the relationship between ends and means in educational programmes, between the overarching goals and aspirations of an initiative and the activities chosen to achieve them.

In the discussion that follows, the aim is not to show the historical process by which the curricula were derived, in terms of the planning and writing of curriculum documents, and the contributions and deliberation of different individuals and groups (as in Walker 1971). Instead the focus is on the *relationship* between the ends and the means. It is important to note that this relationship is not necessarily something that is evident to those creating the curricula. Often, if not most of the time, it is an unconscious process.

### Proximity and rationale

There are two key aspects of the relationship between ideals and curricular programmes: firstly, the proximity of ends and means, and, secondly, the rationale for the choice of means. 'Proximity' here is used to signify the extent to which ends and means are unified or separate. Three basic forms can be observed:

#### Proximity -

- Separation
- Harmony
- Unification

‘Separation’ is the most common form in which means and ends relate to one another (and much discussion of means and ends assumes that they are always separate). In this form (e.g. Davies 2006; Ryder 2002), aside from the necessary relationship of causality, there is no other required point of contact between the overarching ideals and the educational activities employed to achieve them. (It is important to note here that a single curriculum can simultaneously display a number of forms of proximity and rationale).

With the harmony form, however, elements considered important in the ends are embodied in the means. Harmony is seen commonly in efforts to *democratise* schooling (e.g. Apple & Beane 1999; Carleheden 2006; Gandin & Apple 2002; Kaplan 1997; McCowan 2006a), whereby the school embodies or ‘prefigures’ the democratic society desired, by adopting participatory forms of management and horizontal pedagogical relations. It can also appear in a negative form, as seen in the *correspondence* of hierarchical oppression in schools and capitalist society of Bowles and Gintis (1976).

A further form can be termed ‘unification’, through which citizenship is learned through the act of being a citizen itself – such as holding a public office or participating in public debate, consultation or protest. Here, the ends become means, in a cycle of continuing development. Unification can also manifest itself in another way, when the process of learning itself becomes the end, the experience of opening the mind being seen as an ideal state of being (this form is not observed in these three initiatives, but is common elsewhere, e.g. Dinkelman 2003). We can therefore distinguish between two forms of unification: ‘ends-become-means’ and ‘means-become-ends’. It might be argued that the harmony forms above are also examples of unification, since participation in processes of deliberation in school, for example, is an actual exercising of citizenship, school being an arena of society. However, it is important to maintain some distinction between activities inside and outside educational institutions, since the latter are not just one of many social arenas, but are established for the purpose of preparing people for different forms of participation in the wider society.

In addition to proximity, the relationship involves some form of rationale or justification. In some cases this is a deliberate and conscious justification; in others, the means are chosen without a clear consciousness of their relationship to the ends, but nevertheless with an unconscious rationale. The following forms can be derived:

#### Rationale -

- Empirical evidence
- Authority/tradition
- Moral imperative
- Logical connection

'Empirical evidence' refers to instances in which the means are chosen on the basis of an observed link with achieving the ends. This might be based on personal experience: for example, teachers developing particular practices through their years of experience in the classroom. Or it might be based on rigorous scientific research. In contrast, some elements are adopted due to the weight of tradition or authority, with means adopted on the basis of continuity with past practices, or faith in a perceived source of wisdom, such as Paulo Freire. Here, the judgment of the teacher or curriculum designer is subordinated to that of the source of authority. In some cases, the distinction between empirical evidence and authority is not clear-cut. Academic research, itself consisting of empirical studies, is often accepted by others on the basis of the authority of the body or individuals conducting the research, not on the empirical evidence itself. Tradition can also exert an influence through what Walker (1971) calls the 'implicit design' of the curriculum, those elements about which conscious decisions are not made, and which therefore lead to a maintenance of existing forms.

On the other hand, some initiatives are established on the basis of a moral imperative to conduct education in a 'democratic', 'co-operative' or 'inclusive' manner. This form of rationale must always work in the 'harmony' form of proximity. With the moral imperative there is not necessarily any empirical evidence that the means will achieve the ends: they are seen to be the best because they follow the same principles. Lastly, there can be a connection between ends and means that is perceived to have a logical necessity. For example, in most instances it is hard to imagine the development of a skill without some practice of it. This form corresponds to Sockett's (1973) 'logically necessary connection', and appears as one of Tyler's (1949: 65) 'general principles in selecting learning experiences'.

The scheme of forms of rationale can be applied to all forms of curriculum. In relation to a common categorisation of curriculum design (Kelly 2004; Ross 2000), the 'content' approach might be seen to base itself on a rationale of tradition, the 'product' approach on empirical evidence, and the 'process' approach on moral imperative. All these forms of rationale are

relevant primarily to the separation and harmony modes, since unification requires no rationale (it is justified by being identical to the end).

### **Relating means and ends in the MST**

What is the basis on which the MST chooses its curricular programme? In the movement literature, reference is made to the fact that curriculum implies a selection of content, and that this selection is inherently political. The MST is clear about the principles which orient its choice in terms of curriculum content:

At base we can affirm that it is also a question of using in this specific dimension the principle of social justice, that is to say, to select those contents which, on the one hand, relate to the equal distribution of knowledge produced by humanity, and on the other hand, which have the pedagogical potential necessary to educate citizens for social transformation. In other words, we must analyse each piece of content to be taught, asking ourselves to what point it contributes to the concretisation of the other principles which are dealt with in this booklet. (MST 1999a: 15)

This final concept of *concretisation* is important. The MST holds to the idea of overarching principles that are made concrete in educational practices. Yet, in apparent contradiction, the programme is supposed to be based on the practical experiences of educators:

They [the elements presented in the booklet] are a systematisation of different experiences aiming to implement our pedagogical principles, and to make our schools a space for forming the Landless. We have already seen that the process of pedagogical construction is necessarily dynamic and must be constantly reflected on by all of its subjects. (MST 1999b: 45)

In support of this idea of building up from the grassroots, the headteacher Ruth stated in interview that the alternative framework of MST schools arose from the experience of the communities (principally the female members) that conventional education simply was not appropriate for their children and for their political context. The idea of the curriculum being built up from the ground,

through a “systematisation of different experiences”, is similar to the PS, and fits in with their ideals of democracy. The apparent contradiction might be interpreted as a two-way process, a ‘dialectic’ of theory and practice, of ‘concretisation’ and ‘systematisation’. The movement between the two is seen in the statement from MST (1999a: 23): “From our pedagogical practices we could verify the truth of the principle that says: no one learns through somebody else, but also nobody is educated alone.”

However, while educational approaches are supposed to be derived from practical experience, there is also strong influence from key thinkers – particularly Paulo Freire – and from current pedagogical ‘orthodoxies’ in Brazil such as social interactionism, inter-disciplinarity and participatory evaluation.

The key point, however, is that the means chosen, whether through practical experience or the weight of authority, are intended to be in *harmony* with the ends, in the sense that they must be undertaken in the same spirit, or following the same principles. For example, the movement places great emphasis on co-operativism as a basis for organising work in society: it consequently requires that its educational activities be organised in a co-operative way, i.e. through collective classroom learning, student participation in decision-making, collectives of teachers rather than top-down management, and so forth. Part of this ‘harmony’ is that values must be exemplified by the teachers:

In order for a value to be incorporated in the lived experience of people, it must be observed by the students in the lives of the educators. Witnessing is therefore important, that is to say, the teacher’s way of being and of relating to others is also part of her pedagogical practice. (MST 1999b: 24)

However, there are times at which ends and means remain separate. This can be seen in the place of work in the curriculum: as seen above, the practice and the values of unalienated work are incorporated into the school day (harmony), yet the movement also aims to equip its students with knowledge and skills for participation in the job market in later life (separation). There is also a separation of ends and means in the MST in that the educational work in general is intended to help achieve the extrinsic goals of land reform and changes in economic and political structures in society.

Yet, there is another sense in which the means and ends merge completely. The movement facilitates the participation of students in political activities outside the school, such as protest marches and land occupations. Here the students are learning and developing as citizens (means) at the same time they are exercising their citizenship (ends) – as advocated by Mill (1991) and Pateman (1970). There is no separation here between the preparation and subsequent performance.

### **Relating means and ends in the Plural School**

The link between participation within and outside school in the PS is shown in the statement that “school will develop these collective subjects in as far as they make them participants in the construction of humanised school spaces” (SMED 2002: 15). Like the MST, therefore, it requires *harmony* between ends and means, since the aim of constructing the inclusive society is seen to require teaching and learning to be conducted in an inclusive and participatory manner. Importantly, these means appear to be adopted on the basis of a *moral imperative*, rather than empirical evidence to show that they are appropriate for achieving particular ends.

SMED (2002: 65) states explicitly that the objectives of the curriculum follow necessarily on from the underlying politico-philosophical orientations:

The proposal of general objectives for the curriculum, consistent with an educational framework which aims to value diversity, plurality and the differences of socio-cultural experiences, must start with a critical analysis of the concept of curriculum....

The criterion is, therefore, their being ‘consistent’ (*condizente*) with the underlying orientations. These orientations are both epistemological (social interactionist constructivist) and political (social inclusion). The curricular activities emerge from these ‘general objectives’.

However, there are occasions on which means appear to be derived in ways other than being consistent with these principles. For example, there is acknowledgement of empirical research as a basis for curriculum design:

We start from the supposition, *confirmed by the human sciences*, that within the period of basic education (7-14) there are smaller cycles of socialisation and formation that must be respected and pedagogically organised. (SMED 2002: 21, italics added)

This might be considered an appeal to authority as much as empirical evidence, with the sciences being invoked as an indisputable source. There are also other occasions (e.g. (SMED 2002: 25) in which 'researchers' are called on to justify particular activities. Vygotsky and his 'zone of proximal development' are invoked by the Barroso School documents.

The PS, in summary, while showing different ways in which means are derived from the overarching aims, is characterised particularly by a need for the school to model the ideal society it is intended to create. There is little evidence, on the other hand, of educational activities being organised to achieve separate and future goals in creating democratic citizens: the democratic ideals are brought into the present and into the school.

### **Relating means and ends in Voter of the Future**

Voter of the Future has a clear notion of its own aims and objectives, and states these explicitly. It also distinguishes these from the means of achieving them. However, there is no discussion of, or indication given as to the link between the two. Unlike the other two initiatives, VF does not require harmony between the underlying principles and the way the educational activities are carried out. It has a set of goals in terms of knowledge, skills and values to be developed in students, and establishes a set of educational activities to achieve them (separation of ends and means). The latter largely consist of simulations, whereby competences developed in the school can be later transferred to real-life situations (e.g. mock elections will enable students to vote effectively in later life).

As stated in the Minas School programme, after the mock election the students are supposed to be able:



To identify the best candidate to vote for, through his or her political proposals and his or her suitability for the job, using as a base the characteristics of the pupil representatives and teacher counsellor.

The choice of mock elections as an educational activity in VF is based neither on empirical evidence, nor authority, nor moral imperative. It stems from a perceived connection of necessity between the practice of a skill and its acquisition. Since it is seen not to be logically possible for someone to be able to exercise a skill without having first practiced it, valued activities must be transferred from society into school. There is here an appearance of unification between ends and means, since the student is learning to do something while doing it, although in reality there is a separation of training and subsequent performance. Within this, there are different levels of simulation. In the state of Rio Grande do Sul, students vote for the real candidates. This is very close to unification. In Yanomia they vote for pupil representatives, using the same skills, but with a different target. This is a more distant level of simulation. To some extent, the democratic structures in the MST and PS could also be seen as simulations of democratic participation in society. However, they are distinct in that they have a real function within the school, rather than an imaginary one.

It can be argued that there is a certain arbitrariness about the choice of educational activities in VF – that there simply is not a justifiable link between ends and means. There appears, for example, to be no clear rationale for choosing essay competitions as a means of promoting citizenship, rather than, say, preparing a group presentation on the subject (apart from the incentive to participation provided by the prize). On the other hand, it might be argued that there is a form of harmony in action. Since VF can be seen to have competition and competitiveness as key components of its political belief system (rather than the co-operativism of the MST) it therefore makes sense to have competitive educational activities. In the same way, the fragmented and individualist nature of its curricular programme can be seen to stem from its fragmented and individualist understanding of citizenship.

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While all three initiatives are diverse in the ways that ends are related to means, there is a clear distinction between the overriding separation and element of arbitrariness in VF, and the greater harmony or, at times, unification in PS and MST. The elements of proximity are closely linked to extent to which citizenship is conceived of by the initiative as existing in the present for children (in keeping with harmony and unification modes), or alternatively to be attained only at adulthood (leading to separation).

The analysis of means and ends thus far has not attempted to evaluate the efficacy or desirability of different forms of proximity and rationale. Yet it seems likely that a strong separation between ends and means – representing a disjuncture in curricular transposition – will be limiting in terms of effective citizenship education provision. It may not be a problem in developing knowledge and skills in disciplines such as mathematics and geography. Yet in the development of citizenship, this kind of separation is problematic. Firstly, the explicit message of the programme might be in tension with the ethos of the school (as seen in the empirical research discussed in chapter 2, e.g. Morris and Cogan 2001). The element of exemplification here is important, in terms of the institution and its staff modelling the types of democratic relationships it is trying to promote amongst the students. Secondly, experiences of democratic participation among students are likely to be more powerful if they occur within the context of authentic, rather than simulated, democratic structures within the school, or even more, in a real political context outside the school. This discussion will be developed further in the remaining chapters.

The focus will now turn to the implementation in practice of the ideal curriculum programmes outlined in this chapter.

## Chapter 7

### Implementation as teacher enactment

There are diverse approaches to the study of curriculum implementation. An understanding in which, “the main intent is to determine the degree of implementation of innovation in terms of the extent to which actual use of the innovation corresponds to intended or planned use” (Fullan & Pomfret 1997: 340) has been termed the *fidelity* approach. This is contrasted with an *adaptive* or *mutual adaptation* approach, “directed at analysing the complexities of the change process vis-à-vis how innovations have become developed/changed etc. during the process of implementation”. In the latter case, curricula are seen in terms of their reconfiguration in light of local characteristics.

However, the emergence of the mutual adaptation approach was “the result of a reluctant concession to reality, rather than a commitment to a perspective on change” (Snyder et al 1992: 411). Another more genuinely participatory approach to curriculum implementation has been referred to as *enactment* (Cho 1998; Snyder et al. 1992; Thornton 1995). This perspective focuses on the ways “curriculum is shaped through the evolving constructs of teachers and students” (Snyder et al. 1992: 404), there no longer being a linear movement between curricular design and implementation. Curriculum materials and strategies developed externally, therefore, become ‘tools’ to be used and manipulated. For those supportive of school-based curriculum development, this approach enables a process of growth amongst the teachers and students, but for others it raises questions as to whether teachers can be ‘trusted’ to produce a socially beneficial curriculum. In addition, enactment studies:

[A]re interested in describing not just how the curriculum is shaped as it gets acted out in specific settings, but also how it is experienced by the particular participants in the settings. For them [those with an enactment perspective], curriculum has meaning only in terms of individuals’ interpretations of it. (Snyder et al. 1992: 428)

As Snyder et al. (1992) point out, it is better to think of these paradigms as a continuum, rather than three discrete units. Some adaptive approaches are very close to fidelity, and others are

effectively enactment. These different approaches<sup>30</sup> relate principally to the *study* of curriculum implementation, that is to say, the ways that the process is to be understood or researched. Yet they can also be seen as approaches to the task of curriculum implementation itself. In this way, curricula can be implemented without any attention paid to local context, or some adaptations can be made, or lastly they can be constructed through the interaction of teachers, students and the curricular content in the classroom itself. In some cases, the underlying assumption is that a small group of curriculum planners is far better equipped to make curriculum decisions than the mass of participants in the educational process, and that the best the latter can do is to faithfully implement them. In others, teachers, students and the community become key figures in the planning and design as well as implementation.

In the case of this study, curricular transformations are not viewed solely from the perspective of the success of the implementation in relation to its resemblance to the ideal programme, since not all transformations caused by implementation are negative. Teachers (and pupils) are not necessarily irrational, ignorant or conservative in opposing certain innovations. On the other hand, there may be certain factors - such as lack of resources or lack of time - which from all perspectives would appear to be undesirable constraints. In addition, the study will focus on 'meso-level' more than 'macro-level' factors (Benavot & Resh 2003), even though two of the initiatives function throughout the country.

The first section of this chapter will provide perspectives on the implementation of the three initiatives that can be compared with the intended curricula. It can be seen that the initiatives as implemented are strongly divergent from their ideal form. In some cases these are neutral or positive changes from reinterpretation and adaptation to local context. In others, they represent a failure to put into practice the ideals of citizenship learning contained in each initiative. The second section puts forward an argument that these transformations are predominantly due to the figure of the teacher, the extent to which teachers are involved in the design and implementation process, the extent to which initiatives emerge organically from teachers' own political projects, or alternatively through a feeling of exclusion or non-identification, they resist, subvert or ignore it. An enactment perspective involving teachers and students as active agents in the curriculum is put forward as the most promising approach.

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<sup>30</sup> A different categorisation, but one based on the same principles, is provided by Posner (2004). He distinguishes between a *research, development and diffusion (R,D &D)* model, a technicist, linear approach that sees teachers as passive recipients, and a *collaborative* model, one in which teachers are "active shapers of curriculum change to meet local needs" (p.228).

First there will be a sketch of the implementation of the initiatives in the three cases, before a closer analysis of the factors at play.

## Implementation in the MST

As a whole the MST schools showed a fairly high level of integration of the movement's vision in their practice. This varied a great deal between classrooms, and to some extent between the two focus schools, Salinas and Treviso. Some elements, such as the insertion of political discussion into lessons, were easier to achieve than others, such as Freirean dialogue. The teacher Roger – a supporter of the movement's pedagogical principles, but not an MST member – was particularly sceptical about the extent to which those principles had been realised in the schools. Nevertheless, as a whole, there was a sound correspondence between the ideal curricular programme and school practice.

The close link between the political and the pedagogical was clearly borne out in the schools. An example is the maths classes of the teacher Elizete in Salinas School. Influenced by the *ethnomathematics* approach developed by Knijnik (1996) and others, she had developed distinctive ways of integrating mathematics into the life of the community, and relating it to the community's wider needs:

Eight years ago he [my father] used to sell a box of lettuce for R\$5. Today, he continues to receive R\$5. We did the calculations, for example, of the rise in a kilo of meat, how much a box of washing powder had gone up... and the supermarket doesn't pay him any more but manages to charge more to the people who are buying it. So maths, in this way, is a great source of working with economic and social issues of the country.

She also recounted an activity in which students calculated how long it would take for somebody on the minimum wage to earn as much as a politician does a month. Another activity involved working out whether it is possible to survive on the minimum wage, given the cost of basic products.

History lessons, as might be expected, were a key site for political discussions, especially in terms of presenting 'another version of history'. Two lessons were observed exploring the colonisation of Brazil from the perspective of the indigenous peoples, rather than the Portuguese, as is normally the case. A geography lesson taught by Roger was used to explore economic dependency of Latin America on the USA and the issue of international debt. Even religious education became a vehicle for political discussion, as observed in Daniela's class in Treviso School. She used the textbook, *Occupying the Bible*, created by the MST in order to put a more political light on Christianity, so as to highlight issues of poverty and inequality in society.

The issue of neutrality was repeatedly raised in interviews and in observations teachers were seen to grapple with it in practice. No instances were observed in the MST of a political perspective being forced on students, nor of students having their views dismissed or disrespectfully contradicted. The deputy head Horácio emphasised that in these political discussions, positions are not imposed on students:

Often in the classroom we discuss the question of agrarian reform and so on and there are some who don't agree, who think that it's not fair and so on, to take land away from those who have land, and we think this is important and fine. It's fine that it happens, and in school it should be like that, the objective is that they construct their consciousness, their knowledge.

However, there were cases observed in which positions were put forward without encouragement of critical engagement or discussion. In relation to neutrality, the teacher Delson stated:

As an educator, I try to have a lot of debate..., not directed but putting forward my opinion as well. But not as if it was the correct one, you know, now we're going to have a debate, we're going to discuss things, we're going to research, we're going to look much more to form a consensus which can be, if not the majority, the vast majority of the pupils together with us. But then of course, we have this, we have this experience of having studied more... the fact of being older, we have this duty to help in the clarification, maybe not to direct everything, but at least to clarify a good part of the doubts in the debate, so that afterwards positions can be taken, whether by the family or by them.

This passage is ambiguous in terms of the extent to which he sees it necessary for teachers to 'engineer' a consensus: an ambiguity that is characteristic of MST literature as well, where critical engagement is valued but in the context of clear and predefined moral and political positions (e.g. MST 1999a).

Yet while a number of instances of integration of political content into classes were observed, it was not universal. Some classes (e.g. Science and English) were indistinguishable in content from those in a conventional school. In this, Treviso showed a more consistent treatment of the political than in Salinas. In both schools, much appeared to depend on individual teachers, and their beliefs and commitments.

Evidence of Freirean dialogue in practice was mixed. While the Salinas School *regimento* (2002: 8) states, "Research and not learning for repetition is emphasised, aiming for the collective construction of knowledge and encouraging the student to learn to find solutions and make new discoveries", the reality of implementation was uneven. Aline, a 14-year-old student, who had also studied in schools in the city, gave a good indication of the distinctive atmosphere of an MST school:

Because when the teachers give us freedom to speak like this, it is much easier for us to express ourselves, to put forward our opinions in front of others.... At the start there in the local town<sup>31</sup> the teachers, we said something, and they just said it was wrong, they just wanted to show off, you know..... So I never said anything at secondary school, and I'm a real chatterbox, I'm always talking!

There was a good deal of evidence in interviews and observations, that the MST schools provide space for students to express their views. In addition, there was considerable affection shown between teachers and students. The teacher Yoni, for example, would frequently hug pupils in class, and this was not uncommon with other teachers too. Roberta, a teacher in Treviso School, stated that, "I think that here we have much more emotional proximity than in an urban school, for example, with the pupils, here the relationship is much more open....". In addition, students were generally respectful of the need for quiet during lesson time, and teachers did not have to struggle to maintain discipline.

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<sup>31</sup> Aline started secondary school in the local town and moved back to Salinas once the secondary provision was up and running there.

Elizete started her lessons with a new class by finding out exactly what the home background of each was, whether their parents work the land, how much land they have, what they plant and so forth. This is an example of Freire's approach of community research before starting teaching. She also consistently related the academic content to the students' lives and reality. However, these approaches were not universal. Some lessons observed with other teachers involved copying from the board, with little space for discussion.

In terms of the wider aspects of school contributions to citizenship learning, there was evidence of the use of student self-organisation, *mística*, and collective work. The main activity in place for the development of knowledge, skills and values associated with collective work was participation in the 'work teams'. Activities observed in Treviso School included tending the vegetable plot, cleaning and gardening. Initially, the students appeared to be organised by the teachers rather than organising themselves, although the work was carried out unsupervised. However, at the end there was a period of 15 minutes for the students to discuss how the session went with a teacher. In Salinas School, there was not a system of work teams integrated into the curriculum, although responsibilities for cleaning and the vegetable plot were distributed among students from different years.

On one occasion at Salinas School I observed a (double) class set aside specifically for student 'self organisation', after a teacher absence. The students, aged 13-14, were left entirely alone, with no adult intervention, in order to discuss their own affairs. In general, the school has two representatives for each class (one girl, one boy) who meet once or twice a month with the headteacher and deputy to discuss student issues. According to Horácio, "they have total freedom to criticise the leadership of the school". However, there were some limits on student influence. Aline described her experience as class representative in the following way:

Aline: So they [the head and deputy] held a meeting, to see everything that we wanted to change in the school. So we [the students] sat in the classroom, we set aside some time...10 minutes or so. Everyone said what they wanted, so we noted it down and took it to the meeting and discussed it with the teachers there. It was like that.

TM: And did you manage to change anything?



Aline: Yes, we did, we got them to ring the bell for break earlier [laughs]

This does represent a form of student victory, but, as shown by Aline's reaction, it is not evidence of a real change in the power relations. The limitations of student power are backed up by comments by the younger children at Salinas:

Pupil 1: They have a meeting, and we put forward everything, like, the problems of the class. We speak, we discuss everything and gradually find a solution to the problems of the class.

TM: Do they do what you ask for?

Pupil 1: If it's something okay, here inside which is possible without much problem, then they do it.

Pupil 2: But not everything!

Pupil 1: Now if we expect something more, I mean, out of the ordinary, then that won't do.

TM: Can you give an example of the types of things you ask for in meetings?

Pupil 3: Like, we ask for the day that we're going to celebrate the June festival.

In restricting student action to recreational events, therefore, the structures for student representation are not very different in practice from the conventional *grêmio*, criticised by Vicente.

Another example of a lack of student involvement was the drama presentation prepared in Treviso School for the celebration of the founding of the local town: here, the students lined the walls silently while the teachers explained to them the content of each of the two performances. At the end, the teacher asked the students if they agreed and if they had any suggestions, but only in response to material that had been decided by the teachers beforehand. However, having

highlighted these exceptions, the practice in the two schools was participatory as a whole, and did allow spaces for students to develop their capacities through the participation.

How did participation manifest itself in relation to gender? Classroom observation showed equal participation of girls and boys in discussions, or greater participation of girls, and proportions of girls in representative positions were higher than those of boys. The teacher Yoni was actively involved in a women's organisation and tried to incorporate this in her practice and in the school as a whole. However, there were cases of stereotyping of gender roles. An example was in Elizete's class, where boys were chosen to do the measuring of the classroom and the sports pitches, while girls wrote down the measurements. Elizete explained this gendered division of roles by saying that her strategy for dealing with frustrated and aggressive students was to give them active physical tasks. The boys in question were chosen to run around with the tape measure in order to keep them occupied. Further gender division was observed in the preparations for the *feira junina* (June festival), in which all those involved in the drama were girls, and those involved setting up the sports area were all boys. However, in general, MST schools were challenging the low representation of women in positions of political power in the wider society, by having girls in representative positions at the student level, and women in key decision-making roles at the staff level.

*Mística* mainly appeared in the form of dramatic presentations. In 2006, in a religious education class observed in Treviso School, the students were rehearsing a sketch they had written, showing a group of peasant families approaching the mayor to ask for land. The mayor agreed but subsequently reneged on his promise, so the peasant families resorted to occupying the town council by force. The sketch was intended to show the desperation that poverty and these broken promises leads to, thereby bringing alive the political issues for the students through the drama.

The *mística* appeared to have a sporadic presence in school, rather than being a programmed, regular occurrence, aside from the singing of the MST anthem. However, there were other aspects of the physical environment that enhanced the symbolic significance of the school space. In the Treviso School staffroom there was a poster of Che Guevara and one of the MST, while in the hallway, there was one of Lula in an MST cap, an MST flag and a poster of a peace campaign. In the entrance there was a 'museum' display, showing old agricultural implements and other artefacts from the original land occupation: an example of the importance of collective memory

for the movement. Similar displays showing explicit political commitments were also seen in the corridors of Salinas School.

The schools were also engaged in political activity beyond their gates. A form of protest commonly referred to in the two schools was that of the Independence Day marches, when, instead of glorifying the Republic, they made a strong critique of the injustices of the country and promoted the cause of land reform. According to Marco:

So this day the 7<sup>th</sup> September is no longer just to march, it has become for us a day of struggle to show our indignation, I mean, to show our schools, what we have, what we have achieved in the settlements of agrarian reform and because of this we've suffered quite a lot, how can I explain, this negligence of the government which puts out in the media that this is an attack, that this is educating people to cause unrest in society.

In a similar way, the drama presentation in Treviso School referred to above told the story of the establishment of the settlement, seen through the eyes of the struggle of a single family. This formed part of the community's ongoing efforts to make the inhabitants of the local area understand the movement and its goals. Another opportunity for wider political development was the youth camps held yearly on the school's football pitch, where the conditions of the original land occupation were recreated so as to give the young people a stronger understanding of their parents' struggle. In 2004, the students at Salinas also made a visit to a real camp.

The evidence from the MST schools, therefore, is that there are some departures from the ideal programme. The 'gravitational pull' of conventional school practices has meant that elements of student democracy, Freirean dialogue and collective work have not materialised to the extent that the movement had envisaged. Nevertheless, there was evidence of significant elements for citizen development in the form of political discussion in class, greater respect for students and space to express their views, and the relation of academic knowledge to local needs and understandings. The extent to which these elements were integrated into the school day depended on the teachers' ownership of the MST project -- a point that will be discussed at greater length below.

## Implementation in the Plural School

In terms of adoption, there is supposed to be universal uptake of the PS framework across the municipal network. Due to the constructivist nature of the approach, schools are allowed considerable freedom of interpretation, but are strongly encouraged to adhere to the main principles. In practice, there is great variation between schools as regards the extent to which the PS has been integrated. Barroso School, broadly speaking, is an example of the school which is strongly committed to the PS, and Cantagalo School of one which shows greater reluctance.

The PS, therefore, showed varying correspondence between school practice and the ideals of the initiative. As well as between the two focus schools, this disparity was seen between different teachers. While a number of visible elements of the programme had been successfully implemented – such as removal of grade repetition and the inclusion of students with disabilities – in other ways changes had been resisted.

Implementation of the formation cycles has been a great success in terms of *adoption*, since it has been introduced universally in the municipal system. According to the Brazilian Institute for Geography and Statistics (IBGE 2007) the proportion of pupils with a disparity between their age and their school grade in Belo Horizonte dropped 62% between 1996 and 2006. However, *implementation* has been more problematic, with many teachers and parents opposed. In Cantagalo School, the official names of the classes follow the new cycles format, but teachers in practice usually approached them in the same way as the old grades. Teacher resistance was supported by parental reservations, as the headteacher Ermenegilda noted: “But people still demand of you: ‘but I want my child to repeat the year’”.

Despite the attention paid to it in the literature, no significant evidence was found of challenges to conventional approaches to knowledge. In the vast majority of lessons observed, the focus was on the subject disciplines as it might be in any school context. However, in Barroso School, concerted efforts were being made to implement the new forms of assessment that were qualitative rather than quantitative, and formative rather than summative. The teacher Segundo made great efforts to explain this new assessment to the students, so that they could understand the reasoning behind it.

As in the MST there was insertion of political content into lessons, particularly in the work of a few teachers. Counter-hegemonic perspectives were presented in the history classes of Dora and Segundo, in relation to the discovery of Brazil and the Second World War. In another class, Dora aimed to develop students' understanding of the notion of liberalism from a socialist perspective. In a history class with Rose observed in Cantagalo School the students were asked to research the conditions of factory workers in their local community, then relate these to conditions studied through history texts on the 19th and 20th centuries.

What evidence, however, was there of Freirean dialogue? Dora's lessons clearly conveyed a large amount of important information on political concepts, the historical context and current political situation. It also displayed a clear political position on the part of the teacher. The lesson could not, however, have been called *dialogical*, with the students partaking in at most factual answers to the teacher's questions, without presenting their views and engaging in deliberation with other students. This appeared to be due partly to the closed nature of many of the teacher's questions, but also to the constraints of the classroom environment, particularly the noise that made conversation and concentration difficult. In a subsequent lesson, however, a greater degree of interaction was observed. Here students were seen to propose their own theories on US motivations in the Second World War.

In relation to neutrality, Segundo agreed that the question of one's own political views was very difficult. His strategy was to adopt the position of the ideology he was explaining, sometimes, therefore, playing 'devil's advocate'. This strategy was successful, in his view, in developing lively debates in the classroom. Students in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade from Barroso School said of discussions about politics in his class, "It always ends in chaos, with everybody trying to speak louder than the others". Yet, they confirmed Segundo's view that playing devil's advocate – questioning their idea that all politicians were corrupt, for example – enabled the students to examine their assumptions in a way that was positive.

One characteristic that was almost universal was a lack of aggression on the part of the teacher: classes were managed almost always with calm and positivity. It was not rare to observe a student hugging a teacher (in the case of female students and female teachers) and in general, a great deal of affection was shown. There were very few exceptions to this observation. It was very uncommon to observe a teacher shouting for silence in the classroom, or to observe any aggressive or conflictual interaction. Only occasionally, students causing disturbance in class

were sent to the room of the co-ordinator. This is despite the fact that the classes on the whole were large and boisterous, with significant noise levels, making it difficult for teachers to make themselves heard.

In summary, observation showed pedagogical styles that were caring, open and supportive of the development of students' self-esteem, but instances of use of Freirean dialogue through which relations of power are reconstructed were limited to a few teachers.

The most striking aspect of the PS experience, however, was the level of democratic participation shown. Dora spoke of the pupils constructing their own school rules through reflection on questions such as "Is it possible for us to live in an environment without rules, or norms? What are the basic principles for co-existence in the school?" This experience of collective construction is described in a booklet made about Barroso School for a series aimed at disseminating best practice in the municipal system.

While there were a number of structures through which students could participate, the *grêmio* was the most prominent in the data. Luciana, a co-ordinator, gave a positive assessment of them:

We are seeing a strengthening of the *grêmios*. This year right here in the CAPE we held some meetings with the pupils, and the movement we saw was of *grêmios* that today are organised, the children hold debates on the question of school....

Students in Barroso School who did not participate directly in the *grêmio* associated it principally with organising parties and excursions, (although the school radio was seen to be important for keeping students informed and for organising meetings). However, Luciana stated that:

Some very much had a sporting or very cultural character.... But what we have seen is a politicisation of these *grêmios* so they come with other discussions that come to question and intervene in the functioning of the school....

The more politicised function of the *grêmio* was seen to be in evidence particularly at Bandeirante School. At Barroso too, the *grêmio* organised a consultation with students to establish their position on the teachers' strike. At Cantagalo, however, these democratic structures were much less evident. For a start, the *grêmio* was almost nonexistent:

TM: Is there a *grêmio* in the school?

...

Pupil 1: Ah. I've heard there is, though I've never seen it.

...

Pupil 2: There is a *grêmio*, but I've never seen their proposals, there isn't even an election....

Pupil 3: You see, they organised a time for meeting that was only convenient for the organising group, it wasn't for other people in the school.

Other interviews at Cantagalo showed that the students were keen to have democratic structures and relations in the school, but that these were largely absent. One of the students who by coincidence had been for a time at Barroso School contrasted the vibrant *grêmio* there, which had successfully fought for the relocation of school, with the lack of activity at Cantagalo School. This highlights the general problem in the PS of extending the framework to all schools.

In relation to inclusion in the classroom, the most prominent aspect was with disability and special needs. Observation showed that a number of students with varying disabilities were studying in mainstream classrooms, and had support for their learning. Students at Barroso School also highlighted the fact that studying with colleagues with disabilities was a positive experience for them.

One class observed in Barroso School had a LIBRAS interpreter for the 5 deaf students, who made a simultaneous translation of the teacher's and students' speech. When a deaf student had a question, mostly the interpreter answered it directly, although on one occasion he passed it on to the main teacher, who alerted the rest of the class to it. While the deaf and hearing groups were to some extent segregated in their communication, meaning that the latter students were not always aware of the former's comments, all students had access to the main content of the lesson.

However, the headteacher Jessica, opposed to a number of elements of the PS, spoke of the difficulties of inclusion:

Because this issue of thinking that... the teacher is a magician.... The teacher is not going to be able to get 40 pupils in the classroom and work with their differences, from a question of Down's syndrome, cerebral palsy, to a pupil who has a good intellectual development, and be able to follow a more academic system in the same way. However much you put helpers there...there in the classroom the work cannot be as equal as it seems in theory, I think this is too utopian.

These sentiments were echoed in a number of informal discussions with teachers at PS schools.

In relation to gender, the 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in Barroso School were very positive about the equal rights of boys and girls in school, and that in the playground, they jointly played games that were traditionally reserved for one of the sexes. In general, they saw discrimination and prejudice as something that was discussed often in the school and about which people were aware. As in the MST, girls were more prominent than boys as representatives in decision-making bodies (such as the *grêmio*), and were as participatory in class as boys. Both focus schools had female headteachers, and in general in the schools, girls had female role models not only in relation to classroom teachers but also in senior-management positions.

There were some instances of teachers raising questions of race and racial discrimination in class. Segundo, for example, led a history class in which students presented their research on slavery in Brazil. The subsequent discussion involved questions of university quotas for Afro-descendants, forms of modern slavery and the students' own experiences of racism (the students were mostly black and mixed-race themselves). The class ended with an exhortation from the teacher for people to stand up for their rights, even if it was against their nature to make denunciations.

In contrast, I observed a scene in the Cantagalo staffroom, with the headteacher Jessica discussing how to implement the obligatory Afro-descendant history with the teacher Mariana, who was having difficulties in this respect. Jessica recommended a textbook that would allow the teacher to treat the subject in a 'light' way, focusing just on the cultural aspects, while still fulfilling the obligations. This 'cultural' treatment is a means of avoiding problematic political elements.

Like the MST, therefore, the PS shows some inspiring instances of transformation of school practices -- involving school democratisation, the creation of inclusive classrooms, and the opening of spaces for political discussion -- but also instances where changes have not gone



beyond the rhetorical level (i.e. approaches to school knowledge and grade structures). There were strong indications of the uneven dissemination of the framework through the municipal system, with generally strong practice in Barroso School -- where there was a presence of teachers personally involved in the development of the PS -- and, with the exception of a few teachers, resistance and obstacles in Cantagalo School. There was also a great diversity of the practice of teachers within the same school.

## Implementation in Voter of the Future

The case of the VF was the most precarious in terms of implementation. While there were examples of inspiring practice, the initiative on the whole did not manage to integrate itself into the school day and create significant educational opportunities for students. Efforts were focused on high-profile events such as mock elections and debates, heavily publicised by the TRE, but without deeper influences on the curriculum.

One exception was the work of the teacher Glauco. He explained:

We always start the class with what I call the 'daily news item'. They [the pupils] undertake to bring a piece of news that they can get in any source, whether newspaper, the internet or a personal experience that they had. So they prepare a card and we choose a pupil to speak about his or her news item, at the start of the class.... I always try to show to them especially the relation to the public sphere. No one takes an isolated decision that's not going to affect many people. So sometimes they complain about the holes on the road. "Why is it that the roads are full of holes? Because there's no money. But is it really that there's no money? Or is it that the money is being badly spent?"

The issues raised in the VF programme are intended to be dealt with by teachers in their regular classes, in addition to the special activities. However, there was very little evidence of this taking place, except in a few instances. Political discussions and debates were brought into the day-to-day curriculum to a greater extent in Caymmi and Amazonas -- yet this can be attributed more to the schools' general approach to citizenship than to the specific intervention of VF. In other cases, more than integration into the school day, VF was characterised by 'one-off' lectures or

debates. An example was a lecture given by the judge Antonio in Viola School, focusing on three main ideas: avoiding vote-buying, not defacing the city with election publicity materials during the election campaign, and holding elected representatives to account.

As seen above, these lectures are supposed to be “interactive”. However, evidence from the students was that these interactive forms of delivery were not being used. One student, Cassia, from Caymmi School remarked:

I think that...lectures are very boring for young people.... [B]y picking up the microphone you are considering yourself superior, with all attention centred on you. Lectures for young people have to be in the form of workshops, everyone in a circle, sitting on the same level, speaking on the same level, doing activities. It was a bit boring, so that at the end you weren't really awake. And also young people like to question, if there's no space to question they're not going to pay attention any more.

Three important points are made here. Traditional lecturing styles are seen firstly to be boring for students, and secondly to not give them the opportunity to question. The student gives as the effect of this second element that they will not ‘pay attention any more’, but she could equally well have pointed to restrictions on learning opportunities. These are common criticisms of ‘chalk and talk’ teaching styles. The third point is more subtle, but potentially more significant. Cassia sees that the act of picking up the microphone symbolises a hierarchy of power that is inimical to the type of democratic relation being promoted.

Later she suggested that it would be better not to have a judge coming to speak at all, but to have debates just among the young people. Another student, Carla, also remarked on problems with the delivery, which she saw as the explanation for the real engagement of only a minority of pupils in the programme:

Young people like dynamic activities, something more real, you know, they don't like lectures much, talking, talking, they get bored. If adults get bored then imagine how much young people do.

In the lecture observed in 2005, Antonio did aim to adopt a register that was appropriate to the age of the students, and to make the content relevant to their lives, yet there was little evidence of a shared construction of knowledge.

The most prominent activity in schools was the mock elections. Yet, voting for the real candidates in a parallel election raised problems of political preference which the TRE was keen to avoid. For this reason, many states preferred using imaginary public policy parties or class representatives instead. Yanomia did not use real candidates in the 2004 municipal elections, but decided in favour in the 2006 presidential and state elections. However, one school, Amazonas School, decided it could not participate since a number of students were relatives of candidates, and the likelihood of arguments and even physical violence was too great. The personalised nature of politics in Yanomia made political discussion difficult in general.

Sometimes unintended events were used to reinforce the moral and legal points. Antonio described an instance of vote buying within the mock election at Amazonas:

Nobody was going to vote for João<sup>32</sup>, everybody was going to vote for Maria because everyone liked Maria.... When we opened the result there was a surprise: Maria only got one vote, which was her own.... So, after a day or two, it came to light in the school that João had taken his father's money and bought the conscience of his colleagues, buying sweets and fizzy drinks.... So we had a meeting with them, and annulled the result of the election...., we had another election, but what was most important was the conversation that we had with them.... we made João see that he made a terrible mistake.... I said to them [the others], "You have gone most wrong because you sold what is most important, your conscience, so you can't keep João to account for anything, none of those proposals that he made, what he promised...."

A major event of the programme was the debate in the municipal legislative chamber. The debate with the candidates for mayor in 2004 had 90 student participants, 10 from each school. Only one candidate for mayor did not attend. The students posed questions to the candidates, and, while there was some ambiguity as to whether the children had actually formed their own

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<sup>32</sup> 'João' and 'Maria' were names invented by Antonio.

questions, they surprised the programme co-ordinators, and the candidates themselves, with their awareness of political issues.

The debate observed in 2006 followed a format similar to that held in 2004. Antonio emphasised a number of times that the questions had been formulated by the pupils themselves, presumably to dispel fears of manipulation by the teachers to promote their own agendas (the debate was held in the final week of campaigning before the election). Examples of questions were:

- How would you address the high levels of child mortality in the state?
- Do you support the federalisation of education?
- How would you address the low levels of quality in public schools, given that the teachers are often the same as those in private ones?

The candidates answered carefully, without being condescending towards their young audience. Again, this event included a greater element of discussion of real political issues than is commonly the case in VF.

Nevertheless, the tendency in the programme is to focus on procedure – the process of voting, political structures and so forth – and steer clear of substantive political debates. As seen above, neutrality is central to the programme's vision. Sonia, a headteacher in Seconia, made it very clear that within her school there was to be no party political discussion. Teachers had to leave those kinds of views "at the school gates".

The TRE in Yanomia even had to censure some activities so as to maintain the position of neutrality:

At the start of the programme we had an experience... there were many posters with the candidates that were going to contest the last presidential election.... So we had to take care to call the teachers of the pedagogical team and tell them, "Look, we're going to work with the booklet, not with party political preferences". If you put up... photos of politicians you induce that young person to say whether that politician is any good or not.

Yet the pressures towards neutrality meant that students were rarely provided with the opportunity to discuss key issues in relation to inequalities and exploitation. The critique put forward by Freire (1972; 1994) and critical pedagogy theorists (e.g. Giroux & McLaren 1986) of the unwitting support for repression represented by 'neutral' approaches is applicable here.

Despite the aim of the initiative being to provide a major shift in young people's political socialisation, the activities were sporadic and in most cases did not bring a significant change to school practice. In addition, the initiative was most prominent in schools that already had an active engagement with citizenship learning, and did not reach the most disadvantaged schools. In some cases, however, individual teachers and schools did use the programme as a stimulus for their existing practice so as to bring students into contact with electoral debates and develop political understanding.

## **The centrality of enactment**

The distance between the reality of implementation and the ideal curricular programmes – that is, the leap from the second to the third stage of curricular transposition – can be understood by the notion of enactment. Initiatives cannot be implemented in more than a superficial or rhetorical sense if they do not emerge organically from teachers' practice. This section argues that a process of enactment of the curriculum by teachers together with students is both effective in ensuring implementation, and desirable from a moral and pedagogical perspective. Enactment is understood to involve the participation of teachers and students in curricular decisions, and the reinterpretation of that curriculum through the pedagogical interactions in practice.

The section will first look at factors affecting implementation, starting with those relating to teachers and later considering the influence of wider political and pedagogical factors.

### **Teachers**

A major factor affecting implementation is the particular characteristics of individual teachers. Teachers have their own moral and political positions, and these significantly affect the way they

enact a moral and political curriculum. Teachers also vary in relation to the energy, commitment and creativity they bring to teaching in general. As the co-ordinator Kelly stated:

The Plural School is diverse in its practice. We have a policy built on principles, with regulations, with norms, with a training process that tries to work with the teacher as subject, but the pedagogical practice depends a lot on the teacher.

The headteacher Vicente acknowledged that some subjects are more conducive to dealing with the themes of citizenship and the goals of the MST in general than others, and emphasised the importance of individual teachers in integrating these ideas into their specific subjects:

The intention is that the pedagogical framework... should be for the whole school..... But it's clear that sometimes some areas of knowledge have more difficulty in working with this.... So a lot depends on the personal will of the teachers, to achieve, to find ways of at the same time working with specific things in their discipline, and to work with the more general, wider proposal, the pedagogical proposal.

Elizete's work in Salinas School is evidence of the importance of individual teachers. Despite working with a subject (maths) not normally associated with citizen empowerment, she was able to provide an educational experience for the students through which they could develop their understanding of and pride in the rural context, and develop political knowledge and understanding, using mathematical activities throughout. André's class in the same school, on the other hand, showed little effort to relate the scientific material to the students' lives. The centrality of teacher enactment was highlighted by Roger in the same school, who attributed the distance between the MST proposal and the practice in schools to the fact that many teachers "do not live it [the approach]".

Vicente emphasised that it was important for teachers to have a conception of their work as a vocation rather than simply a job for earning money, that teachers should be conscious that they are there "to form citizens". Horácio is an example of a teacher who, despite not coming from the landless community himself, has this kind of commitment:

The fact of my coming here was an ideological decision... I could work in the school next to my house... but the struggle for this... to have a school with this proposal, I feel good as a teacher here, I feel fulfilled...

The PS, being the loosest framework in terms of specific content, is not surprisingly the one which shows the greatest diversity between teachers. Some teachers (e.g. Dora and Segundo at Barroso and Rose at Cantagalo) were observed to give high priority to the development of critical attitudes and others to give little attention to it. The extent to which work with political questions depends on the actions of teachers is shown in the following passage from the interview with Luciana:

Well, you were asking about the racial question. Specifically, it wasn't appearing on the curriculum, in the way the school worked. And then some schools that had groups of teachers who were more activist in this area made projects and were putting forward this discussion.

An example of enactment from VF is Glauco and his efforts to engage students in political discussion and develop awareness of the public sphere. His practice shows how effectively the programme can be implemented if integrated into the school curriculum. The importance of teachers is such that even the public/private split (normally intense in Brazil) is attenuated: the coordinator Edson said that the TRE was expecting to encounter problems working in the public schools, but that the key differential was actually the commitment of the professionals.

The influence of headteachers was also important. There was a strong contrast between Ermenegilda, head of Barroso School, and her deputy Dora, who were strong supporters of the PS framework, and had participated in its development, and Jessica, head of Cantagalo School, who would have been considered by them as one of the 'conservative' teachers and who had strong reservations about the underlying principles and implementation of the PS. Jessica, for example, stated:

I think that the way it [the PS framework] was put forward created a lot of deception. I think that respecting differences, yes, respecting the question of inclusion, this is essential, I'm in favour of it; but respecting also that each human being will have a limit to where he's capable of getting.

Segundo confirms that, while the PS here is a policy of the whole municipal system, "If you have a leadership which isn't very keen for this to happen, in practice it doesn't happen".

However, while the specific biographies and aspirations of individual teachers were central, the extent to which they could work together and identify with one another was also seen to be a key factor in the successful implementation of the initiatives.

One of the strong points of Treviso School, from the MST's point of view, is the fact that all the teachers are from the settlement. This is unusual in MST schools. Partly this is the result of the remoteness of the school, making it very hard for teachers from the local town to work there, but mainly to the fact that the settlement is so firmly established. Even though a large number of the teachers have only temporary contracts, renewed each year, there have not as yet been any moves to replace them with teachers from outside. The fact that the teachers are from the local community, and have spent a number of years working in the school, and working together as a team, is highly positive in terms of the functioning of the school.

Daniela has been teaching there since 1989, before the settlement was officially formed, when they taught underneath a tree or in makeshift huts. She emphasised the importance of being present during the construction of the school and being part of its history. As Delson stated, "The history of the school goes hand-in-hand with the history of our lives". Delson was himself a pupil at the school, coming back to teach there in 1998 when he was qualified. He has also had experience teaching in other 'itinerant' schools, and spent a period of three years working for the movement in the North-East of the country. Delson emphasised the importance of the connection between teachers and the community:

I see that... one of the differences is that we are...part of the community. It's not simply being an educator in the school...we participate in the assemblies, we participate in the meetings, we know the everyday life of these families, just as the families know our daily structure as well...and this often helps our work, our pedagogical function in the school..... In the experience that I had in the city, I didn't even get to know the father or the mother of my pupils.

He continued:



We are a very solid group of teachers, you know, very well structured. We fight together, we cry together, we smile together, we play together, we plan together. The anxieties which Daniela has are shared with the other colleagues, but what Daniela has that's good, that's productive, is also socialised....

These comments were borne out by informal observation of the staffroom and other shared spaces. Delson made the point that it takes quite a group of teachers to submit themselves to evaluation by the students, to listen to what the students say and modify their work accordingly.

According to Vicente, however, not all the teachers in Treviso School are equally committed to the vision of the MST:

Some people understand that the school should be directly linked to the MST, that is, working with the problems that the movement faces...this is the majority of teachers. But there are also those who think that the school should work with this reality, relating to the settlement, but also relating to the areas of knowledge....this is a smaller group of two or three teachers.

This shows that even with a high degree of unity, there are still differences in relation to pedagogical approaches. These differences are far greater when educators come from outside the community. The co-ordinator Marco explained how hard it was for teachers from the city, "to release themselves from the slavery of the system". In relation to these tensions, Salinas School showed greater division in the teaching body than Treviso School. According to Horácio and Ruth, approximately one third of the teachers is from the settlement, one third is sympathetic to the movement, and one third has simply been posted there. Teachers like Yoni, a founder member of the MST in her native North-East of Brazil and a teacher at the school since its founding, and Elizete, formerly Yoni's pupil at the school, as well as those like Horácio and Roger who are supporters of the movement, show a clear difference in their practice from others like André, who have been posted there.

In contrast, one of the major problems in VF is the lack of contact of the wider teaching body with the programme. Glauco did show the desire to share his work with other teachers, and encouraged them to adopt his practices:

I'm trying to convince my colleagues at least to try something similar or at least to look at the cards [the 'daily news items'] because perhaps we can discover the potential of the people that otherwise we wouldn't perceive.

However, these individual efforts were often not enough. Speaking generally about the work with citizenship in the school, Glauco stated:

I think that this project would work better if we could achieve a better harmony between those who are carrying out the project and the other teachers. We still need to sit down and discuss better, to evaluate better ... the strategies that are working in order to reinforce this and set aside what isn't working.

Anabela stated that, although one teacher accompanied her to the debate, and others could be called on if necessary, in reality she carried the project single-handed. The fact that activities were centred on a few figures led to a problem of continuity. Both Glauco and Anabela left their respective schools between my visits in 2005 in 2006. This was not fatal to the project in Amazonas School, but it appeared that activities had all but stopped in Morães. Activities effectively ended at Edson School too, when the headteacher Rita left.

Collective work between teachers is a key part of the PS programme. Yet changes in government policy meant that the statutory pedagogical meeting between staff in school time that was originally part of the PS framework had been abandoned. Segundo saw the ending of the pedagogical meeting between teachers as highly significant in terms of undermining the work of the PS. Without this meeting, according to him, teachers are unable to develop the collaborative work necessary for going beyond subject divisions, developing effective transversal themes and organising extra-curricular activities and school excursions. The need for the provision of time is particularly important in a large city like Belo Horizonte, where teachers live far from the school and often work in more than one institution. Yet it was also an issue in a close-knit community like Treviso School. Vicente also saw the lack of a time in the school day for teachers to meet and discuss their work as one of two key obstacles to implementation of the MST vision.

The importance of collaboration can be seen at the level of the co-ordinators as well as the teachers. In VF, it was clear in all five states visited that the TREs themselves were not fully

aware of the work being undertaken elsewhere in the country, and were not in contact with one another. A greater degree of awareness of other approaches, and sharing of ideas, may well have improved practice. An additional problem stems from the lack of co-ordination between TRE and educational bodies. In Yanomia, the TRE requested the permission of the state and municipal Secretariats of Education before commencing the project. However, there had not been any significant contact since.

Both the MST and the PS claim that their educational frameworks have been constructed 'from the bottom up', with the involvement of teachers and the local community, and, to a lesser extent, students. They are consciously defining themselves in opposition to curriculum models developed by external technicians for implementation by teachers on a passive population (as discussed above in relation to Snyder et al. 1992). The initiatives allow for the participation of the 'base' in the development of the overall framework and allow for individual contexts to adapt the principles to each particular reality. The curriculum in action at Barroso School and the two MST focus schools all had involved significant teacher and community participation in the establishment of the original PPP, and its subsequent development. The headteacher Ruth stated that, "Everything we have managed to achieve today is the fruit of a collective discussion". There are, however, some limitations on this participatory intention in practice. Despite the insistence on bottom-up development of pedagogical practice, there is inevitably some degree of top-down implementation, on account of the national booklets distributed to each school. The "systematisation of different experiences" referred to above can easily become an authoritative document to be followed.

The PS is frequently referred to in the documents (e.g. SMED 2002) as merely official recognition of practices that were already underway in the municipal school system. However, this study shows a clear feeling of imposition on the part of some teachers. As Jessica stated:

It came from the top down, camouflaged as if it were developed [in the school].... [T]he way it was implemented, getting rid of repetition...the way it was disseminated, that was wrong. So the lay person, the community came to see it like this: you go there, you do what you want to, and you get promoted. It's not really like that, is it? It's about respecting difference....

The PS did in fact emerge from the practice of teachers, but it was that of a minority of progressive teachers, and not the majority who were continuing with traditional practices. The SMED official Julia said that as a teacher at the time, it was thrilling to be part of the development of the PS, but that there were other teachers attached to traditional approaches who felt alienated – not to mention the teachers that had started since the introduction of the PS. As Barroso School conference document states:

As was to be expected in such a radical process of change, including habits rooted in culture, there was great resistance from the teaching and student body at the school. Change is difficult for everyone, principally when it implies the loss of a pretended power on the part of the teachers and a change of stimulus for the pupil, accustomed to negative incentives.

VF, unlike the other initiatives, does not claim to have emerged from the practices of educators, nor to have been developed with their involvement. Additional issues are raised by the fact that it was created by non-educational body. The coordinator Amanda, however, pointed out that this was not an imposition. Her account presented the TRE as an organ responding to the requests of the schools – in her phrase, “our role was to run about”, providing speakers, voting machines and other equipment – rather than imposing from above. Edson described this as a function of ‘stimulating’ the schools, since that was where the pedagogical knowledge was located. Amanda stated:

If it had been something imposed, nobody would have accepted it. Everything that is imposed on them [the teachers], they reject. Now the programme wasn't imposed, it was an invitation..... we presented it to the head and senior management. They met with the teachers, asking if they wanted to take part..... We didn't influence at all what they [the schools] wanted to work with in this programme. They made the project, each one with their reality....

It is certainly true that the programme was not *imposed*: schools participated of their own volition. Yet it was not created with the involvement of people within the school. In addition, teachers did not on the whole have a strong link with the project in terms of contact time. Glauco had only two meetings with staff from the TRE, for the purpose of “information exchange”. In

general, there was little involvement of teachers in the construction and development of the programme.

Neither does VF count on the involvement of the local community. *Learning to Be a Citizen* proposes, “Other *participatory* forms developed in the community: essay, poetry, music etc.” (italics added), showing an intention, but without any indication as to how this might take place. Later, the community element is again stated, proposing that “the idea is to organise an educative community for the formation and awakening of citizenship”. Yet in the documents of the individual states, there is no indication of provision being made for this community participation. Neither is there any mention of involving students in the construction of educational activities, even though their opinions are seen to be valued in classroom activities.

Teacher characteristics, capacities and dispositions that effect enactment are not, of course, static. They develop naturally over time, and can be influenced intentionally through interventions. Teacher education is therefore a key factor here. The teacher Roberta stated:

There's no point wanting a teacher who has been trained with a conservative vision, one in which the teacher is supposed to go into the classroom, and not discuss politics, and not discuss sexuality, religion. One who is supposed to go there and exclusively discuss, or rather, transmit the theories of his or her discipline....are you going to demand that he or she changes after 18 years, 15 years of training in this way of thinking? It's very complicated. So we have to rethink the whole training of teachers so that they arrive at the time of working with learners in the classroom already with another conception.

Roberta described how she had to undertake exactly this type of transition, when she joined the school at the foundation of the settlement. In order to facilitate this development, the MST offers significant opportunities and incentives for teachers to study, often on courses provided by the movement itself (there are MST teacher education courses and general degree courses in partnership with public universities). Yoni, who recently completed her degree as a mature student, was being encouraged to start a Master's straight away.

Similar issues are evident in the PS. Segundo saw the main problem with implementing the PS framework is the lack of preparation of teachers: “I think that teachers are not prepared to work in

it [the PS], because we come from a traditional, graded education, the university also has this logic.....” The PS appears to be suffering from the lack of tailored teacher education of the sort provided by the MST. Julia also complained about university teacher education, saying that teachers come out thinking that the PS is “something of the Left...it’s not scientific”. They also argued that teachers needed remunerated time to attend professional development courses while they were in service.

VF also lacks a substantial training programme for teachers. ‘Multipliers’, of which there are one or two at each school, have occasional training at the TRE , and Antonio makes some visits to schools to give orientation to the teachers. Yet the provision is very limited.

Another element emphasised by Vicente as being an obstacle for the implementation of the initiative was the poor salaries and conditions of teachers, meaning that they could not commit themselves wholeheartedly and exclusively to their teaching. Elizete in Salinas School attributed her inability to achieve what she would like to in her teaching to the workload: with the majority of teachers working for 40-60 hours a week, there was very little time for preparation, in her view.

From another perspective, Ermenegilda complained that a major obstacle for achieving the aims of Barroso School was absenteeism of teachers. In the frequent occurrence of a missing teacher, one of the senior management team has to cover, thereby disrupting other management activities. This factor was observed in schools of both the PS and MST. In one case, Yoni gave as explanation for her getting students to copy from the board for the whole lesson the fact that she had to take two classes simultaneously.

This section has highlighted some of the features relating to teachers that affect implementation. Teacher enactment – their ownership of the educational undertaking and their creative reinterpretation of it in conjunction with students – is seen as key to the successful passage of the initiative into practice. Not all aspects of implementation, however, can be explained through this lens. There are other aspects of school and society which create the conditions in which certain practices can and cannot occur.

## **School environment**

A number of the factors influencing implementation related to the pedagogical context of the schools: the resources and time available, classroom management, the physical environment and so forth. One perennial element referred to by Nilda (MST co-ordinator) was the lack of time in school for political participation:

The other [obstacle] is the question of the participation in the struggle itself, that is internally. Since the school has a particular timescale to fulfil, and more specific tasks, it ends up not participating in the struggle at all and isolating itself.

There is pressure from the requirements of the curriculum, particularly exams: secondary students in Caymmi School said that they had chosen not to use the voting machines in their final year so as to focus on their work. Lack of time in the school day also put pressure on activities like work teams in the MST.

Elizete also referred to the requirements of the school system:

We believe in a popular education, a differentiated education, an education that prepares us to continue here... but we are in a type of system... that as much as I want to work in another methodology... I come back to scientific content because they [the pupils] are going to need it next year, because they are going to secondary school, you understand? So we end up sidelining a bit our history of struggle as activists....

Connected to this is the influence of textbooks:

This is a worry, because the truth is that our municipal and state schools are linked to the power of the state. We perceive with the existing textbooks the difference of history from the victors' viewpoint. (Interview with Nilda)

She explains that while there is an MST textbook on history, and other teaching materials for adult education and early years, they do not have their own textbooks for primary and secondary. According to Nilda, this is partly to do with a lack of money, and partly to do with a lack of

people to systematise the knowledge and organise the books. This relates to wider differences between primary and secondary education on the one hand, and adult education on the other, with the latter having significantly greater opportunities and freedom for working with political material (as seen in the case of Salinas School).

While there was a very positive atmosphere in class in the PS schools, classroom management sometimes proved to be challenging. Some activities that could have been significant in terms of developing citizenship were hindered or made impossible through the lack of an environment in which teacher and students were all engaged and could hear what each other was saying. Teachers opposed to the PS framework commonly attribute this lack of discipline to the new policies, particularly the moves away from repetition.

The physical environment in the classroom sometimes contributed to these difficulties. In the winter in MST schools, it was sometimes extremely cold in the classroom, being 5° outside with no heating and very poor insulation. The most striking environmental factor observed, however, was in Barroso School where classes in 2005 were severely disrupted by the noise coming from the main road running along one side of the school. In observations it was often very difficult to hear what the teacher was saying from the back of the classroom. The most extreme evidence of this was the teacher Daniela, who routinely taught using a microphone and amplifier system, on account of voice problems, even though the classes were commonly of less than 30 students. When I returned to the school in 2006, the situation was very different: glass bricks had replaced the windows and other soundproofing devices had been installed in the classrooms, meaning that the noise of the traffic outside was barely audible.

Schools were also seen to lack the physical facilities and human resources needed to implement the programmes. Delson stated that Treviso School would benefit tremendously from having some basic sporting facilities. In relation to human resources, the majority of teachers are on temporary contracts, despite working in the school for many years, making it stressful for them at the start of each year and difficult for the school to plan. In Cantagalo School, Jessica recounted how a number of child and youth offenders had been brought into the school for the aim of social inclusion, but that they lacked the necessary structure and resources (e.g. psychologists, therapists) to attend to and integrate the students (Ermenegilda also made this point). On the other hand, she said that municipal schools could have no complaints in relation to physical resources such as technology, textbooks and so forth.



Another issue in terms of student mobilisation raised by the students themselves was the existence of three separate study periods. 8<sup>th</sup> grade students from Barroso School attributed their lack of participation in the campaign for free public transport for students to the fact that they studied at different times a day, making it hard to articulate their efforts together.

### **Wider political and social context**

In addition to the above factors within the schools, there were also wider elements in society influencing implementation. In some cases, the implementation of the initiatives was directly influenced by political dynamics outside the school (in addition to the indirect influences of the prevailing political system and climate). Marco and Maria Paula spoke of state opposition to the MST as the principal obstacle to implementation.

Marco: [It's] also the question of the incentive of the state itself... instead of encouraging, we found lots of threats, and also reprisals, co-optation of educators ... so it's a really strong obstacle at the state level and also the national level.....

Maria Paula: I think so.... the inspectors go to the itinerant schools and they completely misinterpret it, our flags, our songs. I think they think that we're training people to be troublemakers....

An example of government interference in Treviso School occurred when the municipality made the school remove a board with the MST flag. In the end, they placed the board near the school, outside the school grounds. In informal discussion, Horácio stated that the state secretary of education was quite progressive, and actually spoke out in favour of MST education, but that the regional co-ordinator was opposed and tried to slow down funds won by the school through the participatory budget.

Funding was also an issue in VF, even though it was not an expensive programme to run. According to Antonio, the programme in Yanomia did not have any funding at first, but obtained support from the *Banco do Brasil* and some other private companies. They do it out of goodwill, according to him, and do not require their name to appear on materials. Teresa and Edson,

however, in informal conversation, told me they were worried about the funding for the programme. There were general cuts in the TRE, and VF would be the first project to go, being an initiative aimed at conscientisation. "Conscientisation makes for a lot of hard work!" Edson exclaimed. They implied that the potential political awareness-raising might attract opposition from some quarters, and so slip down the list of priorities.

In informal discussion with Rita after the interview, she also emphasised that the project was in danger because it aimed at conscientisation. In her view it is a radical programme, one which potentially undermines those in power. That is why some people are opposed to it, and why it does not have funding in her view. It is important to remember that even though VF may appear conservative in relation to the MST and PS, it is radical from the perspective of the political elites and does address the pressing and potentially dangerous issue of corruption in politics. When I put it to her that some people might be sceptical about the judiciary supporting a truly radical programme, Rita replied that while most people in the judiciary wanted to support the status quo, there were a few willing to challenge it.

Another political influence was the dependence of the initiatives on the survival in power of a particular government. This was the case with the PS framework, which depended on the re-election of the PT in municipal elections (similar initiatives in Porto Alegre and Pelotas had ended when the PT was voted out of office). Responding to popular opposition to the PS, the PT candidate in 2006 said he would make changes. Dora and Ermenegilda both complained of the removal of the pedagogical staff meeting, and other projects cut by the SMED for electoral rather than pedagogical reasons.

Being heavily dependent on public funding and offices, and being far from the centre of power, Yanomia is especially characterised by political factionalism and corruption. It also maintains political appointment as a means of choosing headteachers (not present in either Belo Horizonte or Rio Grande do Sul) leading to instability in schools and a lack of identification with local concerns. Rita had been sacked as head of Edson School, in her opinion, for her work with VF and her political position in general.

One of the issues encountered by teachers at the private schools in Yanomia was that a number of their pupils were children of politicians or influential government officials. This meant that

issues which in another context would have been impersonal became at times highly personal. Glauco stated:

So it's always very interesting, because there are many pupils who are relations of politicians. Sometimes someone says something which touches a nerve of someone else, and they jump up and say, "you're saying that because he's your relation". I try to show them, "Look, what we need to understand once and for all is the great lesson of making a distinction between what is public and what is private. I'm not going to defend somebody just because he or she is my relation".

As an example of the uncomfortable proximity, one parent at the school on one occasion tried to use the mock election to gain support for his candidacy in the real election. Later Glauco added:

Once we were discussing the use of what is public and they started to say, "It's wrong!" And I took the chance to say, "I have to confess to you that many times I see military police cars leaving policemen's children at school. Then the citizen rings to report a crime: "Oh dear, there's no police car".... My wife says, "Look, you shouldn't say these things".... but we have to show them how things are. We need to show that some thing needs to be said even though they carry some risk.

This is a courageous position, given the significant power and influence that police and other government officials have in Brazil, particularly in 'periphery' towns like the capital of Yanomia. Fear of reprisals is likely to discourage discussion of controversial issues.

One striking aspect of VF was its strong visibility in the press. A great deal of energy appeared to be put into the publicity of the programme, while educational activities were on a small scale. This may have been motivated by the judiciary's desire to improve its image, given that it generally suffers from a bad reputation in terms of unwarranted privileges and corruption. The student Carla described how she had done a television interview the first time they held the debate at the TRE, and did another after the debate observed in 2006. Students were encouraged to wear their VF caps as often as possible, and significant attention was paid to the meeting with President Lula of the three winners of the essay writing competition in 2006. This emphasis on publicity appeared at times to take priority over the educational activities.

The political environment, therefore, can provide considerable constraints on citizen education. It can also be a key facilitator -- as in the MST, where teachers are engaged in the movement's political activities, and in the PS where there has been a wider movement for democratic change with the election of the PT.

There are also a number of wider social factors – such as poverty and family environment – that have a significant effect on the learning process. The work undertaken by the initiatives to empower the most marginalised groups was at times seen to be hindered by the socio-economic disadvantage itself. In the PS, for example, the very poverty and exclusion that the programme was aiming to overcome can prevent the students having the access to the education that can be their way out. The municipal schools in Belo Horizonte receive children from the poorest communities, a number being in suburban and *favela* areas, with a strong presence of drug-trafficking, which not infrequently involves the students themselves in different ways. Luciana spoke of families below the poverty line, without a table and chair or enough to eat in their houses. It is hard in this context for students to dedicate themselves to their studies. One student, during a classroom observation told me how difficult it was to work in the day and study at night, an experience that is common to most of the secondary students in the night period.

Luciana emphasised the social rather than educational challenges:

Our greatest obstacle...is learning how to work with this population which didn't use to be in school..... Do they have learning difficulties? Look, what experience shows us when we do more focused work is that the big question for them is not difficulties in learning, it's the difficulties that the school has in making a relationship, particularly with the adolescent.

The MST does not have this problem to the same degree because their schools are within generally united and well co-ordinated communities. While all the families are poor, they are very aware of the role of school, are likely to know the teachers personally and to participate in its functioning.

According to Anabela in VF, while working in a private school was relatively easy – due to pupils' access to reading materials and the internet, and better family conditions – in a public school, things were very different:

You come along and at first they even laugh, "What's this, Miss? What's this got to do with us?" If you're disheartened, you stop there. You have to go on, discuss things, try to show that politics is in the lives of all of us and if we don't participate, we stay on the sidelines.

Interestingly, being from a *privileged* socio-economic background can also be an obstacle in terms of political learning, according to Glauco.

Many of these children are used to having everything given to them. They don't need to struggle to get things. There is another serious problem that we have. For their parents there's always a cost.

It appears, therefore, that while poverty can be an obstacle, the history of struggle that children in the MST have prepares them better for political development than the comfortable upbringing of children in private schools.

The influences of parents on their children, and that of the community in general were also seen to be very important. In the MST this was seen primarily a positive light. Elizete considered family influence fundamental for political consciousness:

Yes, some [of the pupils] already come with a political awareness from home, on account of their parents. We have children of *assentados*, you know, their parents are activists, their parents have a good political awareness, so they pass this on at home.

Horácio agreed:

I think that it [the students' propensity to express themselves] has something to do with the history of the parents. It has something to do with the way the families formed themselves... from this experience of collective struggle, of the

questioning, and therefore, they understood the force that ideas have and the force that comes from organisation for mobilisation....

One of the principal factors which distinguish education in the MST from the other two initiatives is the nature of the community. As Maria Paula explained:

I would say that...the camp is a big school. When an individual goes to the camp and starts his education there in the camp, he is already in a school.... Because it's very different working with a child in nursery school in a settlement, from nurseries in the town. In a settlement you have all the experience of living in a collective.... And it's different from a child...who...stays just at home and his home is within another home, which is behind a wall.

This illustrates the idea raised frequently in the theoretical literature (e.g. Caldart 2000) of the movement itself as a school.

Teachers at Treviso described how they went round to all the houses in the settlement asking families for their views on the school, and used this consultation to form the basis for planning. Yet, despite the fact that high degrees of parental involvement in education are evident in the MST, some problems can also be seen:

In the community there are parents... who don't have that more political preparation and understanding of where we try to get with this, who have a really strong resistance to the more pedagogical question..., because they think that the child really has to learn maths, geography, history, that even they didn't learn, so that later they can compete in the job market. So it's a resistance that we find not only in the teachers, but also in the community, with the parents. (Interview with Marco)

These types of problems characterised the PS particularly. Jessica saw family problems and lack of support as the key obstacle to success in the school:

[H]ere in our community the families don't get involved.... So this lack of family structure, this question of domestic violence itself, almost of the abandonment of the child, this is what makes difficult any project that we try and put in place.

Importantly, she did not attribute this only to poverty, comparing Cantagalo School negatively with another school in which she had worked, where the community was very disadvantaged, but nevertheless more supportive of their children's education. She also complained that the parents only gave value to the core subjects, and would not send their children to school if they knew they were going to do workshops in music, cookery or dance, visit the theatre or watch an educational film. The teacher Neide also emphasised the lack of political engagement in the local community.

Problems relating to the composition of the school community were also seen in Salinas School. Elizete pointed to changes over time, which had made it more difficult to sustain the MST vision in the school, with the proportion of pupils from the settlement falling from 80% when the school was founded, to 30-40% now.

At the time I was a pupil, never a week passed ...without doing a *mística*, without doing some drama, we don't have this any more. This year, we haven't even managed to get the vegetable garden together.... The proximity to the MST has diminished... because the pupils are also, not so much children of *assentados*, and those that are..., their parents have gradually lost the link a little bit....

Changes, therefore, have come to the relationship between the school and the MST. There have even been complaints from some of parents not from settlement over issues such as the singing of the MST anthem and the practice of other forms of *mística*. This points to a possible element of weakness in the MST approach, in that its survival depends on the kind of conditions present when a settlement is first formed, but cannot be sustained. This points to the need for a new framework for established settlements, as Cohen (2004) calls for in relation to other areas of the movement.

For Segundo, it is not that the community is irresponsible, but that they, like the teachers, do not understand the PS framework:

I think that the community, the pupils, the parents, they also don't understand well the PS, and also up to a certain point reject the PS, because they are also the fruit of the generation of traditional schooling.... They think that this is a school where you don't need to work in order to pass the year, you see.

Segundo's view was that the PS framework needed to be revised in order to bring a greater understanding among these communities. Barroso School, according to him, also has an unusual feature in that, being centrally located, it does not have such a coherent community surrounding the school. The students come from a number of different areas, and, therefore, this fragments to some degree the ownership of the school and community actions in favour of it. The school is located in fact in an upper-middle class area, and many of the families who live closest send their children to private schools.

It is clear, therefore, that the implementation of these initiatives owes a great deal to social influences, particularly the centrality of the family and the community as a site for the development of critical capacities and political awareness and commitment. This leads us to a notion of 'community enactment', through which the programmes must be owned by the communities, and learning experiences must be located within the communities as well as the school. The headteacher Ruth pointed out that one of the challenges of the closeness between school and community is that it requires a very coherent position on the part of the teacher. This form of coherence between personal and public life is certainly challenging, but forms part of an organic link between school and community that plays a vital role in citizenship education.

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There are strong indications in the three initiatives, therefore, that teacher enactment reduces the problematic disjunctures in curricular transposition in the implementation phase. This means that the initial aspirations of the initiatives and their concretisation in curricular programmes can only become a meaningful pedagogical experience for the students if the teachers own the programme and creatively express it through their own work. The most successful examples of practice -- the work of individual teachers Elizete, Dora, Segundo and Glauco for example, and the Barroso and Treviso Schools as a whole -- were those where teachers had either been part of the construction of the programmes personally or had 'made it their own' and integrated it with their own politico-



pedagogical understandings. The problems faced by the PS of extending the framework to all schools in the municipal system are not so much to do with the challenges of disadvantaged neighbourhoods and schools, but with the absence in those schools of teachers personally engaged with the framework. If teachers do not endorse the initiative from the inside, then implementation is necessarily shallow. For example, formation cycles are spoken about by name, but in practice the logic of grade structures is continued.

The external environment did place constraints on the implementation of the programmes: for example, opposition of the authorities, physical resources in schools and an overcrowded curriculum. 'Community enactment', and the involvement of students (discussed in the following chapters) are highly important. Yet the factor that emerges as key to the implementation is the engagement of teachers. Partly this depends on their individual dispositions and capacities, and the extent to which they have had access to teacher education conducive to a more democratic practice. And yet a central factor -- and one often overlooked in the literature on practice of citizenship education elsewhere -- is the involvement of teachers in both the pedagogical and political processes: firstly, the emergence of the programme from school practice rather than a project imposed from above; but also, the linkage between the programme and wider democratic movements. Participatory structures in the PS, for example, are supported by the existence of structures in the wider society such as the participatory budget, which create an environment in which people expect to have a say in decisions that affect them. The participation of MST teachers in a real political struggle that is bringing a tangible change to the lives of one of the most excluded communities in the country gives sense to their political work in schools.

Nevertheless, as seen in existing research (Snyder et al. 1992), enactment is not easy to achieve. One of the problems is that it is demanding in terms of teachers' energy and creativity. As Kelly stated: "Now it's much easier working in a school where they say, 'It's going to be like this, this and this until December', than one which you have to help create". So the comfort of freedom from responsibility that comes from limited autonomy can dissuade teachers from adopting a more 'enacting' role. In this task, the MST and PS have been considerably more successful than VF, which has achieved only a superficial integration into the educational environment of the young people. Yet even the former two face considerable problems. While the PS was initially a grassroots experience that was systematised into government policy, in the process of its dissemination it became an imposition for the majority of teachers who were not originally involved, and who interpreted the contemporary changes in the school system (e.g. lack of

discipline) as having been caused by the programme itself. This resistance cannot be dismissed as 'conservativism' and is not easily dispelled through professional development courses. Contrary to the beliefs of some of the advocates of the programme, these teachers cannot be ignored or 're-educated'. The MST, on the other hand, can boast an extraordinarily united teaching body, many of whom were personally involved in the construction of both the movement and its pedagogical framework. Yet its schools do not exist in a vacuum and there are constant tensions with the government authorities, the teachers posted to MST schools from outside the movement and the opposing values of much of the rest of the school system and society. These remain significant barriers, but they should not detract from the inspiring possibilities opened by these initiatives.

## Chapter 8

### Citizenship learning and the limits of predictability

Evaluating the success of a citizenship education initiative is challenging to say the least. It is hard to isolate the effects of a specific initiative from the general effects of school. Furthermore, it is hard to separate the general effects of the school from the effects of the wider society in which the students live, their family and membership of other organisations, contact with media and so forth. As Davies (2006: 22-23) states in relation to education for global citizenship:

There is an 'attribution gap': the further one goes along the chain, the more difficult it is to attribute the perceived effect to the actual programme. That is, if the intended final impact is a more peaceful society, and if the society does become more peaceful, how far can one go back down the chain to say it was the result of a particular peace education programme (Warner, 2004)? Similarly, if the eventual aim of a global citizenship programme is a collection of 'global citizens' who will act concertedly in particular ways to challenge injustice and promote rights, how do we track these individuals and groups during and after their school life, and, conversely, how do we engage in 'backwards mapping' to work out what caused people to act as global citizens, and what 'percentage' was due to exposure to a global citizenship programme in a school?

Researchers can, through quantitative research, go some way towards showing the effects of specific interventions on student performance – performance relating to the recollection of knowledge or the use of particular skills – as in IEA Civic Education Study (Torney-Purta et al. 2001), and Niemi and Junn (1998). This involves controlling for other known factors (though not all influential factors will necessarily be anticipated). However, the broader effects of education relating to understanding, sensibility and values – in many ways the most important effects – are extremely difficult to gauge, both in terms of determining them and of relating them to specific causes.

These difficulties are highlighted by the fact that two of the initiatives in this study are full curricular programmes, and one is a specific intervention that fits sporadically into an existing

curriculum. With VF it is particularly difficult to separate the effects of the programme from the wider effects of the schools that the students attend, when other projects are taking place within them.

As outlined in the introduction, this study does not attempt to provide a full evaluation of the effects of these initiatives on the learners. Even if the assessment were to be based solely on the current perceptions of the actors, it would still be unfeasible due to the lack of comparability between the initiatives in terms of student intake, age groups and so forth. A full evaluation would only be possible with a larger, longitudinal study. Nevertheless, the data gathered here provides a number of indications of the influences of the programmes on the students and their implications for the development of citizenship. An example of an area in which this study can provide evidence is the extent to which students participate in school and the types of power relations existent. Three sources of data will be drawn on here: the perspectives of the students themselves in interview, the perspectives of the teachers in interview, and my own perspective, in the form of formal classroom observations and other experiences in the school. The combination of these three can provide indications of the effects of the programme, as well as highlighting important differences in understanding of those effects among the different actors involved. This chapter also provides a number of signposts to the causes of positive development in students.

There will first be summaries of the key findings from each of the initiatives in relation to the students' political capacities, values and action. These summaries will focus on characteristics which distinguished the initiatives from one another and from general expectations of students of a similar age. Following that, there will be an analysis of factors underlying the contrasting observations of the different initiatives. An argument will be put forward that the features of curricular transposition discussed in the previous two chapters – namely, harmony or unification modes in the transposition of ideals to curricular programmes, and enactment in the process of implementation – are key to transformatory processes for students. However, it is also argued that even in the presence of these features, the effects are far from predictable. The individuality of students and the exercising of their agency mean that they can always reject or reinterpret the messages of the initiative. A truly democratic initiative will always leave the door open to 'failure' in the achievement of its aims, but paradoxically it is in so doing that it does achieve its aims.

## MST

As the headteacher of Salinas School emphasised, an immediately striking aspect of the MST schools is the simple fact of young people who would normally have a very short school career going on to secondary and university level and to teaching and other careers. However, this analysis will not focus on these 'quantitative' aspects, but highlight distinctive elements of citizenship learning. Salient characteristics of students in the MST schools were awareness of political issues, particularly those of inequalities and social class; scepticism of official forms of media; belief in the conscientisation of the people as a means to wider social transformation; confidence and articulateness in expression of political views; a commitment to collective work and self-organisation; and pride in rural and working-class culture and identity. However, these characteristics were not universal across the student body, and in each case there were significant instances to the contrary.

Firstly, the students showed awareness of the problems of Brazilian society and of political action to resolve them. According to the teacher Roberta, of Treviso School, the students come to school already with a strong sense of criticality:

They are very critical, you know, the truth is that this generation now in school, they all were born here... they have consciousness of what's happening, about why things happen in this way. It's not that, for example, 'Why is there poverty? Oh no, it's because God wills it'.... No, it's because there exist policies, the economy is a certain way....

The criticality of the students was reiterated in a separate interview with Elizete, in Salinas School:

For their age, I think that they have an awareness, not all of them... but the majority they have a consciousness of what's happening, so here in the classroom, they come in, the news that they listen to in the morning... they already start to talk about it with me.

Interviews with students bore this out to some extent. When asked what she wanted to do to change the country, the student Aline, at the same school, referred to getting rid of hunger, and implementing the 'participatory budget' more widely in the city. She stated:

Brazil has to change because of this, you know. So that not only some have all the wealth of the country while the poor people, who are the majority, are there working to support their families for a pittance, a miserable amount. There are some who live in the city, in the *favelas*, they should have an opportunity too because who knows if there isn't a great talent hidden there.

In general, students showed some knowledge of the current political situation and of political structures and institutions, although this varied widely. The pupils at Salinas complained of the prevalence in society of vote buying and the problems of candidates doing little for the people once elected. Yet some confusion about the different figures of political significance could be seen amongst the younger children. One pupil stated:

Like the story of Paulo Freire, he was a teacher who fought also to teach underneath the trees, who gave... he was one who died..... So we always remember his story....

This passage shows the romanticisation of past figures, with Freire presented as a martyr (not historically accurate) and as someone close to the earth and the people (only partially true). They also confused two current corruption scandals – the *mensalão* (vote-buying in the House of Representatives) and a notorious money-laundering case.

Yet the students generally did show criticality in relation to the media. While few had access to newspapers, the majority watched the television news on the Globo channel. Salinas pupils stated:

TM: And how do you see this reality? Through the television or [interrupted]?

Pupil 1: No. The television shows only the good side.

TM: Really?

Pupil 1: Because it should show...the true side.

Pupil 2: The bad things.

Pupil 3: That way everyone would think better.

Pupil 2: Get to know things.

...

TM: Why does it only show the good side?

...

Pupil 2: It's like this, whoever has money controls things....If someone shows that the mayor isn't doing anything...he can get into big trouble. Because whoever has money is in control. We who don't have anything stay quiet.

When asked whether everybody voted well, a pupil at Treviso School stated:

There are some who just watch television: so he [the candidate] does that, he does a load of things. When he gets to power he's there at the top and he doesn't know anything, he doesn't do anything. He just gets all the money. He forgets about everyone else.

Later one pupil stated in relation to the media that, "we don't know who to trust". In discussion, the student Aline showed herself to be aware of the political positions of the different news programmes in terms of their support for or opposition to the PT and PMDB (the party currently in the state government). This awareness of the media among a number of students was all the more significant since many of the teachers cited the negative influence of television and its values as a key obstacle to the implementation of the MST vision in the schools.

A further notable aspect was that the pupils showed a belief in and a commitment to the process of conscientisation (Freire 1972). This was seen to be a necessary prerequisite for political change, both in relation to choosing electoral candidates who would support the needs of the people, and in engaging in other forms of political action. Pupils in Treviso School put forward the following view:

TM: [A]side from voting in the elections which come every two years, is there any other way of bringing change in the country?

Pupil 1: If the people conscientise themselves,... to do things and not just think and put forward ideas and not do anything, stay still. Achieve what you want.

TM What is this conscientisation?

Pupil 2: It's to think what you're doing, to know what you are doing.

TM: And how do you learn to do this?

Pupil 1: You look at the reality of the people.... many people are living on the streets, are hungry, so we stop and think that that could be happening with us, couldn't it.

Interestingly, when asked how school could help in this process of conscientisation, she did not emphasise the acquisition of knowledge or analytical skills, but, "companionship, solidarity, friendship". This reflects the prominence of these values in the MST programme.

The pupils in Salinas School showed some scepticism towards the vote, and a belief in popular power:

Pupil 1: If they are, if they are elected, in reality everything stays the same, they carry on and on and nothing changes, everything gets worse and worse.

Pupil 2: So I think that these local councillors and mayors shouldn't exist.

TM: No?

Pupil 1: Nor the senators.

Pupil 2: I think that they shouldn't exist, I think that is up to us to change things in this country.

Pupil 1: Only up to us!

One reason given was that the money takes a long time to trickle down the different levels of government, allowing plenty of opportunity for embezzlement and interference in the distribution of funds. (This is particularly relevant in the case of the MST, where a number of government officials are strongly opposed to the movement.)

Pupils at Treviso School, however, showed faith in the vote as a means of changing the country:

TM: [D]o you want to vote? No?



- Pupil 1: Yes, because it's our vote, we're going to decide the best thing for our country.
- TM: Can the vote really change the country?
- Pupil 1: Ah, it depends on the person, as well, that we vote in...if he's someone interested in changing the country, making things better, like.
- TM: And how do you decide who to vote for, who that candidate will be?
- Pupil 2: Analysing the proposals, seeing, you have to look at the character of the person.

The criteria for voting, and the value given to the vote, here bear a strong resemblance to those of VF. This suggests that it is misleading to think of a neat social movement / liberal democracy split between the children in the two initiatives.

However, conceptions of citizenship were not always those of political transformation (bearing in mind that respondents' understandings of the word 'citizenship' are not equivalent to their underlying political values and aspirations). Pupils at Salinas School stated of citizenship that, "It's helping others, sharing what one has". The interview continued:

- TM: And do you discuss citizenship here in the school? What is citizenship for you?
- Pupil 1: Citizenship is living with others...
- Pupil 2: To have rights.
- Pupil 3: To know which are your rights and responsibilities. Like that.

Yet despite the last statement, the children appear to have a view of citizenship based more on the virtue of individuals than respect for their rights. When asked the question of whether everybody in Brazil is a citizen, these pupils replied negatively, not because many are excluded and living in poverty, but because not all people "respect others", "can live with others" and "are honest". In the pupils' opinion, school was very important in order to learn these virtues. A more combative conception was shown by pupils in Treviso School, putting forward the elements of "claiming our rights" and "going after what we want". They also displayed a notion of political oppression,

highlighting the fact that old people who were illiterate were exploited, and thereby not able to exercise their citizenship.

A striking characteristic of the students in class was that a large number were articulate and confident in their speaking. Elizete contrasted the MST students with those from the nearby town:

Who pays these marvellous salaries of the representatives? It's us! But I speak about this here and it gets a debate going in the classroom, the children get excited, everybody wants to speak. There [in the town] they don't, there are one or two who express themselves, who have political awareness, but the majority don't....

In accordance with the MST goals, the students showed a commitment to collective work. A pupil in Treviso School stated in relation to the work teams:

[T]he majority of the pupils thinks it is [enjoyable] , because it wasn't the teachers who decided, they didn't force us to do this....all the pupils like to have a tidy school, an attractive school, a school that you can arrive and say, "Ah, that's my school". ...It's also good because of the working together, we also learn from that. Like, the cleaning, the tree-planting, the vegetable plot, we learn from that.

Here, the student emphasised, firstly, the importance of a sense of decision-making, responsibility and ownership. In terms of learning, there are aspects of collectivity, and also of technical skills. In addition to the work teams, classes took responsibility for cleaning their classrooms at the end of the day. I was struck by the naturalness, lack of complaint and efficiency with which the students tidied and swept their room after the bell went in Treviso School. This appeared not an irksome obligation, but a natural and enjoyable way of behaving.

There was also significant evidence of self-organisation. Ruth in Salinas School spoke of the way the class council enabled students to resolve their own problems of disputes and disruptive behaviour. The student representative at Treviso School related that the voice of the students was increasingly heard in relation to the facilities and decorations in the school. Yet, more impressively, she stated that the students had been able to bring changes in teaching styles ("the way the teacher explains things"), particularly in the case of one teacher who was rather abrupt and unfriendly. She is a good example of someone who has developed considerable levels of

knowledge and skills through her role as representative in the school (although not all pupils had such an active role).

In a 'self-organisation' class observed in Salinas School, the students (in this case all female) were deciding how to raise money in order to pay for a school trip to a theme park. Significant skills of self-organisation were observed, in terms of discussion, decision-making and recording of the meeting. While one of the students had a lead role in the discussion, all seven made contributions and were listened to. At some points, voices started to be raised and more than one discussion was underway at the same time, but usually one of the students said "one at a time", and order returned. Agreements on each particular topic were reached only after lengthy discussion and consideration of a number of different possibilities. One student with a notebook wrote down each item as it was decided.

In relation to the gender dimension of this self-organisation, Vicente states, perhaps surprisingly given the strong machista culture in Rio Grande do Sul and the subordinate position of women, that:

In reality girls participate much more than boys do. This is true. Principally we perceive this in the process of working in the school that girls are more aware. They incorporate it as something important and participate more. For boys, in adolescence, they're more estranged from this.

As stated previously, the greater participation of girls than boys in school decision-making was borne out in observations both of the MST and PS schools. It is not clear how far strong girls' participation was the result of MST policy or due to general currents in society. Roberta referred to a generational change:

They [the pupils] choose and the boys happily choose the work teams of cleaning, of decoration, and the girls for the vegetable garden and the fields, without any problem. Yet this is, I believe with the younger generations. But of course with the older people, with the parents there's still a lot of this [division of gender roles].

In addition, she says that her own son has to wash the dishes at home, quite an unusual event in the region.

In addition to these instances of participation in the school, Ruth highlighted political action outside its boundaries. The first example was visits to the MST camps: "Students go there, experience life in the camp, exchange experiences with the children, do workshops, so this is very strong". She also highlighted participation in the movement's mobilisations:

The school does not distance itself from this struggle. Children initiate campaigns ... the school is in constant movement. Always campaigning for teachers, for the quality of school transport, the widening of the civic space, our children are always in this debate.

Yoni referred to a number of instances in which students from Salinas had engaged in occupations of public buildings and other political actions.

For the MST, a key part of the political struggle is the development of the identity of the landless people, in order to galvanise working-class solidarity and combat debilitating feelings of low self-esteem. The Treviso student representative showed positive attitudes in this respect: "[Our] settlement is of the MST, and we can never forget that, you see, because it is a struggle that's up to everyone. We want to claim our rights". Other pupils in the same interview, when asked what they had learnt during their time at school, stated:

Pupil 1: Ah, that you have to be a good citizen, also that we mustn't hide where we're from...

Pupil 2: What we want to do. Never hide, never be ashamed of the name of the MST.

Pupil 1: Never be ashamed of the struggle that our parents had, because if it wasn't for them, today we'd be stretched out, lying on the ground, cold and hungry.

The children at Treviso School in general showed strongly supportive attitudes towards the MST and land occupations. They saw that while the MST could not change Brazil on its own, it was helping the country to go in the right direction. However, pupils at Salinas showed some negative attitudes to movement. One referred to the fact that in the land 'invasions' (importantly this word was used rather than the term 'occupation' favoured by the movement) the landless often

vandalised the properties of the land owners. Yet, they did show positive attitudes towards the young landless (*sem terrinha*) meetings.

In general, students at the MST schools displayed a remarkable degree of personal well-being and enjoyment of school, a point emphasised also by teachers in interview. There was very little sense of antagonism towards the school as an institution -- a common phenomenon amongst teenagers in many countries. In terms of political knowledge, students were characterised by some degree of understanding of current affairs and awareness of issues of social class and inequalities, but in some cases also a degree of naiveté and confusion, especially in the younger children. In relation to political capacities, the students showed confidence in their communication and the ability to express their opinions, and the ability to organise themselves and make decisions collectively. In relation to values, they showed commitment to the overcoming of social inequalities, particularly through a process of conscientisation, and in Treviso School an identification with the MST and rural identity.

## Plural School

The Plural School shares with the MST evidence of a widespread increase in the influence of the student population in school decision-making. There is also evidence of intense political development of a small number of people in the *grêmios* (but not, importantly, of those outside the leadership). There were also instances of participation in political action outside the school. Another significant finding is the development of inclusive attitudes and practices among students in response to introduction of inclusive practices in the school. Lastly, and in apparent contradiction to the above, there is widespread misunderstanding or rejection of the framework of the PS itself.

Students strongly engaged in the *grêmios* reported significant political development. Thaís, head of the *grêmio* in Bandeirante School, described the process of broadening her understanding of political issues as a result of her participation:

The *grêmio* campaigns for things for the school, for example, you see there's a teacher missing. Ah! You complain to the head. But it's not the fault of the head that there is a teacher missing, that the desks are broken, that there aren't enough

materials. Ah! There aren't enough funds. Why aren't there enough funds?... It's a national problem. You begin to see that the structure of society is much bigger. So we begin to get involved in larger issues than this, not only in the *grêmio*.

For Sueli, head of the *grêmio* at Barroso, the experience was also one of widening horizons: "The world has, it's much bigger, there are many more people, there are many more problems". Sueli's participation in the *grêmio* led her to attend the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre along with a delegation of teachers from the city, which also helped her to see the local problems in the larger context. Silvia at Bandeirante School also commented on various qualities gained:

You can't see something and stay quiet any more. You change completely. You also learn to administrate, very big responsibilities.... You learn to live with others, to speak in public. You learn this type of thing...to comment, to read a lot.

Public speaking skills were also emphasised by Thaís: "I didn't use to say anything. I used to arrive in the classroom and I was shaking a lot... Now I go to the Federal University and I speak to the students without any problem."

Lucas (aged 17), in Barroso School, stated:

I think that our maturity... grows. Our way of seeing things.... [There are] student[s] who come to school, study and go away, you know. And all they do is to complain that things don't happen in the way they should happen, you know, because being in the *grêmio*, is to see the whole process, which, sometimes... is so difficult to deal with things, to work, to make this all happen, you know.... because you learn how to solve problems.

Silvia commented on how participation in the *grêmio* requires a 'public' understanding of and working with others, across their 'private' differences:

...you have to live with difference in the *grêmio* because you have people of all types. You can't arrive and say "you won't participate because I don't get on with you". So it's like that that you have to end up separating the personal act from that. The *grêmio* is for everybody.

For this reason they try to engage people who do not normally attend meetings by organising different types of events, including football competitions.

Students like Thaís and Silvia, therefore, had very rich processes of political development, but they are not representative of the whole pupil body. Although now in a state school, Thaís had previously attended a private school, and came from a supportive family background. It is not clear how much these structures facilitate the participation of students from more disadvantaged backgrounds, and whether learning experiences are provided for those outside the leadership.

Three first year secondary level students interviewed at Barroso School, who were not part of the *grêmio* expressed scepticism about its political nature, and its efficacy as a voice for the students. There appeared from this interview to be significant difference between those involved in running the *grêmios* and the rest of the students, with valuable political experiences largely confined to the former. This view was supported in interview with the deputy head Dora, who, despite being a strong advocate of the *grêmio*, admitted that: “it’s not the majority of the pupils...who end up involving themselves more with the issues of the school”. In relation to the causes of this lack of participation, Sueli stated:

Because, the people, it’s not important for them, they think it’s us that are working to improve things... they live in their own little worlds and they don’t mind about other things, so it’s complicated ... to be participating, it’s difficult. These people aren’t even participating in their classes, let alone the *grêmio*.

Yet while she attributes responsibility to those not participating, the *grêmio* did not appear to be making itself accessible to all. Segundo made a broader criticism of its effectiveness:

So their demands are also disarticulated, you understand. They haven’t got this notion of the political. It’s an evil of contemporary society, people are more and more individualist. When you’re individualist, you can’t think about the group in a more general way, and demands that will be good for the group, you only think of demands that will be good for you. I want more football in the school, I want more PE lessons, this sort of thing.

However, taking a broader perspective than the *grêmio*, there was evidence of a general increase in student participation in decision-making. Dora believed strongly that the students had undergone a process of political empowerment:

I see that with every year that passes...I don't know if it's because of our way of dealing with the children, we're not passive at all. Our pupils are very determined, our pupils question, our pupils go after what they want.... But I see every year us forming pupils, or at least a group of pupils, who leave here more aware, who have political positions....

She then related the story of one particular student who left the school to become president of the Municipal Students Union of Belo Horizonte, participating in student political activities at the national level. In Dora's view, there is a strong link between democratic processes in the school and political participation outside it:

So I see that a good proportion of our student manage to understand and live that democracy and then live it outside. Because if it is lived in the school... if he [the pupil] manages to participate in the life of the school where he is seen as a citizen with rights, he can exercise these rights here in the school, and that implies duties too. For him it seems clear to have that role outside, to be an aware citizen.

Dora also provided an example of independent political thought emerging in the students. Recently the teaching staff had been on strike for salary demands, and a number of students were opposed. Dora tried to convince them of the importance of strike action using historical evidence of the development of the strike as a form of challenge to bourgeois power. The students, however, disagreed with her, maintaining that it was no longer the most appropriate form of political action.

Segundo highlighted the empowerment of his students to critique his own teaching, and not to accept "the teacher as the master of knowledge". However, he was ambivalent about the level of political awareness of the students. A major obstacle, in his view, is that "they are a generation that is not used to reading a lot, to reflecting on things a lot, a generation brought up by the mass media, so they have this problem". For this reason, "they are critical, but their critique is a



superficial one". He also points to the problem of religion, and the way that evangelical students close their minds off to any political discussion or other view that undermines their beliefs.

The headteacher Ermenegilda, however, was confident of the capacities of the students to speak up:

They have an awareness already, they know about rights, they speak, they demand what's due to them, even outside the class council, they come to us, to the head's office, to ask for something or complain about some teacher....

She also discussed elements of school rules decided by the students, such as their not wearing uniforms, and being able to leave the school in lunch times. Julia stated:

You go into school and there are teenagers, young people, who speak, who stand up for themselves, who claim their rights, who have strategies of resistance that you can't even imagine.... So it's necessary to listen to this, because they're saying something.

An example of changes in power relations in the municipal schools in Belo Horizonte is the evaluations of teachers by students being introduced in Barroso and Bandeirante Schools. Even the three students at Barroso referred to above, who were not active participants in the grêmio, emphasised the change in power relations:

TM: Do you think in general the voice of the student is heard?

Pupil 1: It has more weight than the voice of the teacher I think.

Pupil 2: Yes, it's because the students are in the majority.... one or other voice doesn't count for much, but the voice of the people I think it has more power than the voice of the teachers themselves, of the headteacher.

Pupil 3: And also we can demand things, what we want, we can claim our rights, you see.

TM: And do you manage it?

Pupil 2: We even get rid of teachers who aren't teaching properly.

This view was confirmed by other students interviewed and teachers as well. Some of the latter, not surprisingly, were a little nervous about student power over them, and of the evaluations of them that the students were beginning to carry out. As the coordinator Kelly stated:

The school's not the same as it was years ago. The school's more democratic, the pupils are freer. But this also causes other problems, because we teachers aren't very used to this more democratic way of doing things.

So, while participation in the *grêmios* may have been limited, there is evidence of a significant shift in power relations in the schools, and empowerment of the students.

In addition to processes within the school, Ermenegilda saw direct political participation itself – in the social movement form – as a key means of developing citizenship. Students in Barroso School were active in these forms of participation:

We worked in a building much worse than this...the children mobilised themselves, a group of teachers and pupils.... They went to the street, they closed off the street, there were politicians there, there was a really strong participation and afterwards...we managed to get the funds through the participatory budget from the city council with a big mobilisation of these pupils. (Interview with Ermenegilda)

Ermenegilda was also positive about the proportion of students involved: "It depends, in something like the street mobilisation...a great mass of people went...the majority of them" (although she pointed out that this involved mainly the older students). She added that "even those who don't participate actively, they have an idea what's going on, and they participate directly when we call them to a council to resolve something".

Student campaigning was also instrumental in obtaining the soundproofing from traffic noise. Another campaign was mounted in order to ensure more teachers for the school. The protest led

to students being arrested, and the consequent publicity put pressure on the SMED, who on the very next day provided extra teachers. Dora stated in relation to this incident:

What did it need? It needed our pupils to get hit and go to prison. Pupils under 18 years of age to be arrested and to go in a police van with handcuffs and everything. But have they had a better citizenship class? I think they haven't.

One area in which significant changes in student attitudes were expressed was in relation to disability. Students in Barroso School, even those who were fairly negative about the PS framework in general, were very positive about the experience of sharing the classroom with students with visual and auditory impairments and learning difficulties. They had not come into contact with people with disabilities outside school and they considered it an enriching experience to engage in this interaction for the first time. Observations showed students in general to accept the presence of people with disabilities in the classroom with great naturalness.

Segundo stated that he observed high levels of tolerance and respect amongst the students, and very little racism. Prejudice and lack of respect were seen only in relation to musical styles and fashions, although there were some religious disputes (stemming from the rise of evangelical protestant groups).

A final aspect was the students' understanding of the PS framework itself. Thaís and Silvia were highly supportive of the PS, even organising *grêmio* events to raise awareness of it (they recognised that most of their colleagues had little idea about it).

Why is the poor person 'stupid' and 'ignorant'? Because he doesn't have certain information that the guy who went to the private school had. Many schools are exclusive, that's why we defend the Plural School. Often when the teachers make students repeat, drug trafficking in the *favela* becomes a lot more attractive than school, and what's more they earn money at the end of the day.

However, the irony is that despite the significant gains of the programme in relation to educational inclusion and democratisation, most students had little understanding of the PS framework and were not generally supportive of it. Other research (e.g. Dalben 2000a) has shown similar rejection amongst parents and local communities. This lack of understanding is seen in an

interview in Barroso with students described by the teachers as 'bright'. Despite showing themselves to be articulate and generally knowledgeable, they had very little awareness of the underlying aims of the PS framework. When asked why they thought the SMED had introduced automatic promotion, they replied that it was probably a money-saving mechanism, to avoid paying for them to repeat.

In addition, it was common for students and teachers to see the introduction of formation cycles as a cause of students working less hard and consequently of a drop in standards. In informal discussion with students during one observation, I asked why most of the class were not doing the exercises set on the board. The answer was unequivocal: "because there's no repetition".

The rejection of the PS programme seems to contradict the development of the inclusive attitudes outlined above. Yet, what students are opposed to in PS is not inclusion in the classroom, but challenges to traditional knowledge and assessment. Students (and certainly parents) seem to want traditional forms in this area.

In summary, therefore, there have been significant changes in the schools in relation to democratic participation of students, both in terms of internal participation and engagement in wider political activity. Those interviewed reported significant personal development in relation to their political understanding and actions. However, these intense forms of development were restricted to a minority of students. In addition, despite opposition to and misunderstanding of the PS framework, the students showed strongly inclusive attitudes.

## Voter of the Future

Some tangible effects were observed in the VF programme. Students developed knowledge, skills and values in relation to voting and the electoral system. Those who participated clearly took on board the importance of a responsible choice of candidate and the need to keep politicians to account. However, wider influences on democratic attitudes and practices were not apparent. The superficiality of implementation appeared to be reflected in the superficiality of development of the students.

The initiative did appear to have achieved its aims in terms of raising awareness of the vote itself.

Students could distinguish between voting based on personal material gain and that based on long-term benefit for society as a whole. Like many others, Carla considered that analysing a candidate's past history (and particularly any past positions of political power) was the key means of deciding who to vote for. A student at Morães (12 years old) reported that, "It's not voting for that person who's attractive, who puts out adverts, who's going to give you something". A number of the students had also absorbed the issue of analysing candidates on their performance and voting them out if they did not fulfil their promises.

What appeared beyond doubt is that the students enjoyed the process of voting itself. As Glauco states:

Glauco: They adored voting at the machines in the elections. Some even said, "Next year I'm going to make a point of going with my father.

TM: Even without voting?

Glauco: Yes. I think this is very interesting, because at the end of the day it's the road to something which in the future can make them go from a playful thing of using the machine to the more serious thing that it actually is.

Another important event in which students participated was the debate with candidates in the TRE. The teacher Anabela gave a very positive evaluation of the experience of the debate in 2004:

They were really engaged, they participated... at the time of the debate, they got up and asked questions to the candidates.... there were lots of interesting questions, which were just as good as the television debates..... there were times at which the candidates even were left a bit disconcerted by the questions that they put to them!

This final point was borne out by my own observation of the debate two years later. Edson also emphasised a definite increase in questioning of the students, and their greater confidence in speaking out.

Carla gave a positive assessment of her own learning in the talk given by Antonio, but affirmed that this was not applicable to all the students:

Carla: No, we learnt a lot of things. The plebiscite, what a referendum is..., it was interesting.

TM: Do you think it was a useful experience for everyone?

Carla: I would say that it wasn't for everybody. Because some people go there and they make the most of it, and others go just to clown about.... It was interesting for those who went to absorb everything there was to absorb of the project....

Here use of the term 'absorb' is significant here, in terms of the pedagogical approach. The emphasis of the curricular programme in fact was on the transmission of information, skills and values, and not on participatory construction of knowledge and understanding. This type of directing of the students was generally avoided in the PS, although it could be argued that the MST was prone to pre-empting the political views to be adopted. In general in VF we can see the majority of the students adopting the discourse of the project, and showing that they have learnt the key elements of assessing candidates, not accepting vote buying and so forth. However it is much harder to tell if they have truly adopted these new values. Later Antonio continued:

[W]e can perceive that they managed to learn all the notions in the booklet, they managed to learn all that we have presented to them, so I believe that the critical sense took hold, the little seed that was planted.

Adherence to the 'transmission' mode of pedagogy is clearly evident here. When asked what they remembered from the talk the previous day 11-year-old students from Viola School replied "not buying votes", "not killing" and not "robbing":

TM: But what's the problem with vote buying?

Pupil 1: It's a crime.

....

TM: And if it wasn't a crime would it be okay?

Pupil 2: Then I would do it.

They did not appear to have grasped the moral spirit of the message here. A number of other students had trouble remembering what the judge had said.

The scepticism in politics which pervades Brazilian society did not appear to have been dispelled by the programme:

TM: So when you are able to vote for the mayor, how are you going to know who to vote for?

Pupil 1: To see what they have to offer us, to see what their proposals are... because, to speak the truth, today none of the politicians are honest.

Pupil 2: No.

Pupil 1: None of the politicians...we don't believe any more in our politics, because it's just promises, promises which they never fulfil.

(Interview, Morães School)

The majority of students did not want to become politicians, the main reasons for this being corruption and the weight of responsibility. However, one girl in Viola School stated:

I would like to be mayor because I would like to change the city. I would like to show people. I would build a hospital, and asphalt all the roads. Because you know, there are a lot of people running the risk of dying on account of the potholes.

There was uneven evidence of the development of awareness of political issues in general, with the exception of local electoral disputes. The student Carla, however, was very positive about the effects of the initiative in general:

[L]ike a donkey, he has two things here [pointing to her eyes] so he can only see straight ahead, but when he takes it off he has a wide vision. And I think this happened with many people at the school, you understand?... So he [the student] can choose better, he can vote better.... [A]nd when you give this broader vision to the pupils, they take it home. They debate this with their fathers, with their mothers.

She also showed some criticality in relation to the media:

Many times, when they [the media] come out praising the government, but it's the opposite...because we know what the roads ...are like, the hospitals, we see that

politics isn't working, it's not working. So when we see on the news...we know it's a lie. It's an idiotic thing on their part, because they think the people are thick and they're not.

Attending the debate was an important learning experience for her: "[I learnt] a lot, a real lot. To ask, to know how, what answer they were going to give me, the way they try to hoodwink us, you know, avoid the question..." She was chosen to represent the students of her school in the 2006 debate, and introduced the initiative to an audience of about 200 people with considerable confidence. Yet, while there is evidence of political development here, Carla is clearly not representative of the whole student body (as she herself pointed out).

The teacher Anabela was also genuinely impressed with the students. When asked whether she had observed any change in the students she replied:

There is, because they already have this vision, 'Who am I going to choose now? Is it anybody? No. Is it me who's paying? Who is it who pays their salaries? It's us, teacher! So I'm going to choose somebody who's going to do something for our society, something for our form of work, for our class, for the neighbourhoods of our city.'.... [O]ne even put 'And if the President hadn't bought an aeroplane with that money, health would be better, education'. I mean, he's watching television isn't he? He is listening, interested, that issue had got to him. Because much earlier when we started he wasn't really involved, and now he wrote this.

However, despite Anabela's positive assessment of the change in students, the interviews suggested that political knowledge was rudimentary. A student at Viola School thought that Lula was mayor (admittedly he was only 11 years old). Others were not aware that they could vote at 16 and 17. Glauco spoke frankly about the criticality of the pupils in general in relation to the media:

TM: The pupils, in general, would you say that they look at the news in a critical manner?

Glauco: I don't think so. The majority don't yet make this critique of the news.



When asked whether the students were interested in discussing political issues in the classroom Glauco replied:

It rather depends. There's still a lot of that thing of whether I'm being affected by it. For example, a discussion on potholes in the city is much more interesting than a discussion of some scandal, something very far from them, that they don't feel directly affected by. I think that this is a jump that we must make still. There is still not enough reading<sup>33</sup> to understand that something happening over in Brasília really is affecting my life here.

Here Glauco raises the issue of making the link between the local and national, and the interrelatedness of the private and public. These links were seen to be successfully made by students in both the PS and MST (in the former particularly those involved in the *grêmios*).

While there were some advances in the students' knowledge and skills in relation to voting and political awareness in general, there was little evidence of development of wider citizen capacities (relating to the restricted vision of citizenship highlighted above in Cummings 1996). Although the *Learning to Be a Citizen* booklet emphasises understanding of rights, there appeared to be little development of the notion in the students, aside from the right to vote itself. One of the students in Morães School spoke at length about the importance of history for understanding gender relations, and for working to bring equality between women and men today. However, there is no evidence that this understanding and ability of expression was due to the intervention of VF, which pays little attention to gender issues.

In addition, in keeping with its lack of prominence in the curricular programme, democratic participation of students in the school was very limited. Schools did not appear to have adopted decision-making bodies for pupils, and there was no evidence of a significant shift in structures or ethos. Neither were there opportunities for the students to participate politically outside the school.

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<sup>33</sup> The word 'leitura' (reading) in Portuguese, particularly as used in educational circles, often carries the meaning of 'understanding' more than literally reading a written text, i.e. in the sense of Paulo Freire's 'reading the world'.

One part of the data important for understanding the initiative is an interview with secondary level students at Caymmi School, who were presented as being 'less engaged'. Interestingly, while they may have had less involvement in the programme, this was not an indication of lack of involvement with politics, but of reservations about the programme itself. One student, Cassia, stated when asked about the initiative:

The idea's great as a political theory, but it could integrate politics in a different way, not making the pupil a simple voter, but rather a politician...because when you've got the critical sense that the building of a square, the paving of the roads is not a favour for you, but an obligation, having this sense...and knowing that you are a social politician participating in youth movements, you are going to know who to elect....

Later in the interview, Robson said in relation to Antonio's talk:

Some things also I didn't agree with.... He spoke about, that...poorer people don't have the awareness to vote...that for a person to vote you have to have structured schooling.... But you see, it's the politicians themselves who don't want this to happen so they can monopolise people. So I think that, I don't believe in anything in politics.... That a person, he's hungry...he's going to vote for whoever helps him at that particular moment, because he's thinking about satisfying his hunger and everything. He's called a 'vote prostitute' because the politicians, they distribute food in the interior<sup>34</sup>, they give tiles, they give bricks to the people who are short of money. Of course they're going to vote. Even they understand that, they end up making the poverty which allows them to ....[cut off]

Cassia continued:

[P]ublic education... I don't think it's going to get better, because the politicians don't want it, the politicians don't want the young person to have this awareness. That he has, that he knows he has the right to quality education, quality health care, why are they going to improve education?

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<sup>34</sup> i.e. outside the state capital.

These more critical attitudes towards politics -- which in many ways show a sophisticated understanding of the political and relations of power in society -- made the students appear disengaged from the programme. While the school interpreted this disengagement as stemming from apathy, it is in fact due to their understanding of the limitations of initiatives. Similar dynamics were apparent in Amazonas School, where the pedagogical co-ordinator Pamela attributed the disengagement of some students to their scepticism of politics and their feeling that the project was just another 'trick'.

In summary, therefore, the programme was successful in transmitting a set of values in relation to electoral honesty and responsibility. There was an increase in basic knowledge about voting and political processes, an appreciation of the importance of the vote and the relationship between one's choice and the welfare of the country/region, and development of skills in using the voting machine. However, in many cases there was absorption of the discourse of the programme but not necessarily its full internalisation. In a minority of cases, there was development of significant skills and knowledge associated with mounting a political campaign and acting as a representative. However, there was no significant increase in awareness of or commitment to rights, or of other aspects of citizen identity or action, and little development of democratic participation outside voting (those aspects corresponding to *maximal* citizenship in McLaughlin's [1992] view). Importantly, the initiative appears to have largely ignored the existing political knowledge and action of students, and interpreted disengagement from the programme as a lack of interest in politics in general.

## An unpredictable space

As discussed above, while gauging the citizen qualities or capacities of students is difficult, it is an even more uncertain task to assess their causes. The final section, therefore, aims to build a picture of plausible influences, rather than discovering clear and certain factors. Some of the wider factors influential for students' learning were covered in the previous chapter, such as socio-economic level, and family and community influences.

Despite the complexities, there are clear links between the findings of the previous chapters and those of the effects. The MST and PS which showed the most complete and dynamic implementation and organic development of means from ends also showed the most extensive

processes of transformation of students. There is a strong indication that the greater coherence of these two initiatives at the two previous stages of curricular transposition was influential. Firstly, the existence of harmony modes of transposition between ends and means was significant, particularly in the form of democratic processes within schools. One element of this is the existence of the space for discussion in schools. As Aline stated:

I think that if I continued living there in [the local town] and studying at that school, I wouldn't think in this way.... It's like they, they don't teach right, you know. They don't want the children to have a clear vision of what's happening in the country or of those things. They just teach you the content that they have to and that's it.... And here in the school, it's different. Here in the school you can speak to teachers in the hallway. You can say what you think, you can ask anything about politics and the political parties and so forth.... They speak, they, they always converse with us.... That's why, that's why I like it here more. I think that this school made me grow a lot as a person.

Interestingly, the main factor given by Aline is the availability of teachers to speak with and listen to the students, valuing the element of communication per se rather than the transmission of a specific political knowledge, skills or values. In VF, in contrast, the lack of substantive political debate and emphasis on neutrality certainly had a restrictive effect on student development.

The links between school and community are central here, with this space for discussion needed both in the classroom and at home. As the teacher Roberta stated:

Because the families went through a process of necessity, of politicisation... of being four years in a camp, with all the discrimination from society, with everything that goes on you end up seeing things in a different way, don't you? So they come from a family which in some ways already has a critical sense, in relation to current affairs. In the school, as far as is possible, within the possibilities, we work, for example the issue of the land, the issue of income distribution, of drugs, of work, of education. So I think it happens because of this.

These statements highlight the complications, in initiatives like the MST, of separating influences of the school from those of external factors. Roberta asserted that the fact that because the

students were already critical, it was easier to deal with the political issues in the classroom. The question therefore remains of whether school can deal with these political issues in the absence of a politicising context outside. As seen in the previous chapter, the changing nature of the local community was making it harder for MST schools to sustain their vision.

While a number of students in the MST highlighted the element of school discussions as the key factor in their citizenship learning, the pupils at Treviso School emphasised the work teams. As the teacher Delson stated:

It would be the participation, generally, in the decisions, at work, in the work we do...because the children learn to clean the classroom, we have the work in the vegetable garden, the work in the fields, so this is an incentive for the pupil.

As well as these forms of harmony, the unification of ends and means, while less common, was an important opportunity for student development when it did occur. It is clearly significant that these more radical forms of political involvement were endorsed by the headteachers as well as teachers of schools like Barroso and Salinas.

At the implementation stage, enactment also appears to have been highly influential. Students showed trajectories of enhanced political understanding in those schools and classrooms where the teachers owned the curriculum, had participated in its development and were creatively reinterpreting it. In contrast, the superficial implementation of the VF programme is mirrored by the absorption of rhetoric concerning voting and particular skills, but not a deeper political development in students. Yet enactment involves student as well as teacher ownership and recreation of the curriculum. While in the MST and PS the extent to which children had been included in the initial design of the curriculum was not clear, both initiatives showed a commitment engaging the learner in the day-to-day delivery of the curriculum.

However, even in the case of the MST and PS, the effects were very uneven. This is partly due to the fact of their inconsistencies at the previous two stages of transposition. For example, many teachers in the PS were actively resisting the framework and delivering a traditional curriculum. However, this is not the only factor at play here. Even with 'perfect' enactment, results are still unpredictable. This is because human agency means that particular results simply do not come automatically from particular interventions. Whatever the learning environment created, the

learner can recreate, transform, distort or destroy the intended message. This relates to the analysis in Unterhalter (1999) referred to in the introduction, in which it is seen to be impossible to wholly define and determine education through citizenship, the former existing in its own "particular institutional space".

According to the co-ordinator Luciana, criticality among students and the community is fostered by allowing them to participate (as with J. S. Mill). Yet she pointed to the unpredictable nature of the relation between democratic schooling and citizen empowerment:

It's an expectation, but it depends very much on how each person constructs his or her own path. Some might really come to work in a more collective way.... But...it's a seed you sow, and the fruit that grows depends on the person, on how they lead their life, it depends on how they insert themselves in the larger group....

Luciana here highlights the element of the individual's relationship with the collective as a determining factor. Yet there are a multiplicity of factors. What is certain is that the leap between the implemented curriculum and the effects on students is one that cannot be easily bridged. This is not necessarily something to be lamented: it is simply a fact of human learning, and in some ways represents the beauty of the educational process.

This chapter, therefore, while only able to make tentative claims about the effects of the initiatives on the students, provides some indications of the importance of elements at the previous two stages of transposition. A 'seamless enactment' of educational activities that themselves have emerged organically from the political ideals appears to provide the most effective learning environment for students. However, there is always an element of unpredictability in the process, stemming from the individuality and agency of the learners.

## Chapter 9

### Conclusion

This thesis has set out to explore the complex relationship between education and citizenship. For this end, three initiatives in Brazil were chosen, being intrinsically interesting cases and opportunities for the development of theory. A conceptual framework of 'curricular transposition' was put forward, highlighting four stages of the educational process: the initial ideals or aspirations, the curricular activities designed to meet them, their implementation in practice and the effects on learners. While the thesis could not illuminate all aspects of these processes, given the constraints of a research study of this size, indications were provided of the challenges posed by disjunctures at the different stages, and ways of overcoming them. A notion of 'seamless enactment' – referring to the organic linking of ends and means, and of the ideal and the real – is here proposed as a response.

The contribution of this thesis, therefore, takes two forms. Firstly, it proposes an analytical tool for understanding citizenship education, and by extension the curriculum in general. Secondly, using this tool, it puts forward a normative argument for a particular approach to citizenship education, one which is seen to enhance the political agency of those involved and to form links with wider processes of social transformation.

This final chapter will draw out some of the implications of these theoretical frames. It will then relate them to the three cases, and provide an overview of the initiatives' distinctive characteristics. Finally, there will be a reflection on possible future directions of this research.

#### **Curricular transposition**

The framework of curricular transposition has been developed in order to highlight the problems associated with the promotion of citizenship through educational interventions. These problems can be understood in terms of three 'leaps': that from ends to means, that from the ideal to the real in the process of implementation, and lastly, the attainment of the goals of the forming of citizens. The empirical research has explored the ways these three initiatives address the leaps. In

the first case, the initiatives displayed differing degrees of proximity between the ends and means and employed different rationales for their choice. In their attempts to implement the ideal curricular programmes, various factors contributed to constraining or facilitating that implementation, relating to teachers and their relationships, the school environment and wider political and social elements. Lastly, the initiatives brought about processes of development in the students which departed from the original vision both due to the effects of the previous stages, and elements of unpredictability through human agency.

It is misleading to view these stages as discrete. They are neither chronologically separate, nor isolated from the influence of the others. The overarching aims are not always conceptualised prior to the means of achieving them, the curricular programme is often developed through implementation or developed only in relation to a particular context, and the effect on students is an ongoing process rather than an end state. Furthermore, there are particular approaches to the whole educational process which deliberately engage in all the stages simultaneously so as to bring a more organic link between them. Nevertheless, it is analytically useful to separate the stages out in order to understand the various dynamics at work.

The contribution made by the framework of curricular transposition is that it highlights some of the ingenuousness in existing and past EFC initiatives. Governments and other promoting bodies sometimes assume that it is sufficient to have a political aim and create an educational policy to achieve it. Educational processes are extremely complex, even in a task as apparently straightforward as learning arithmetic. In an area as diverse and contested as citizenship, these processes are more complex still. Only a small portion of the literature on EFC attempts to understand these complexities. As discussed in chapter 2, there is a section of the literature that is normative (e.g. Callan 1997; Galston 1989; Kymlicka 1999), principally discussing the desirability of citizenship education and its goals, but without paying great attention to the means of achieving them and whether those means are likely to be effective. Descriptive empirical research (e.g. Torney-Purta 1999) rarely analyses the link between the practices and the overarching ideals. Finally, evaluations of EFC initiatives (e.g. McAllister 1998; Niemi & Junn 1998) are often highly reductive in terms of the proxies for political development and can say little about the complexity of the causes. It is necessary to have a framework that allows us to see the links between these different stages of the educational process.



The framework of curricular transposition itself does not provide answers to the difficult questions of what ideals of citizenship should be promoted, of which educational activities are most effective, and how students learn. Nevertheless, it does draw attention towards the crucial questions themselves, and provides us with a lens through which to better understand the processes.

### **Seamless enactment**

While the majority of the thesis is analytical and does not explicitly put forward a normative argument, there are normative implications, and the research leads to the endorsement of a particular approach to EFC. This approach can best be described as 'seamless enactment'. While the thesis cannot develop this idea fully, a brief outline is provided here, drawing together the features highlighted in the previous chapters. Two characteristics of seamless enactment are that all the stages of transposition are in harmony, and that they are conducted with the participation of all key actors. The importance of teacher enactment in the process of implementation was shown in chapter 7. The schools and classrooms in which the various initiatives were most fully implemented were those in which the teachers felt a strong ownership of the programme and creatively reinterpreted it through their own practice. Top-down implementation is both unlikely to succeed, and contrary to the democratic principles on which the whole undertaking is based. While some studies discussed in chapter 2 (e.g. Cavaría 2005; Walkington & Wilkins 2000) are sensitive to the centrality of teachers, a good deal of the literature, while paying lip service to their involvement, sees it as acceptable to present to them a ready-made citizenship education programme. The process of enactment also involves students, and their involvement in both the construction of the programme and in the learning experiences themselves are highly influential in bringing positive results. Firstly, this is because students will engage more fully in the programme if they feel a personal involvement with it, and secondly, because the citizen skills, knowledge and values themselves are enhanced by this process of involvement.

The notion of seamless enactment, however, also involves the prior stage of transposition from overarching aims to curricular programmes. This is best served either by harmony between ends and means -- where the educational processes themselves are carried out in a democratic fashion - or ideally unification -- where learning takes place through citizen action itself. In this, the thesis

supports the approaches seen in a number of efforts to democratise schooling (e.g. Apple & Beane 1999; Gribble 1998; Suissa 2006).

Another aspect is harmony between the different elements of the curricular programme. In the MST educational framework, the emphasis is on 'omnilateral' rather than 'unilateral' education, meaning that the different elements (intellectual, emotional, physical) must all be engaged. This is seen most clearly in the use of the *mísitca*, through which aesthetic and emotional sensibilities are aroused in support of the political cause, and indignation at injustices expressed. The VF is very shallow in this respect, appealing to the learner's sense of civility and reason in not engaging in electoral corruption, but not addressing the wider aspects of the human being.

Seamless enactment also involves a link between educational processes and the lives of the teachers and learners, including their political activities outside educational institutions. Effective EFC must be linked to wider political movements, struggles and events. Despite tentative movements towards 'de-differentiation' (Young 1998), particularly in relation to vocational education, the 'school' retains its dominance of educational experiences. Yet it is highly problematic promoting citizenship education through formal education institutions, whether public or private, particularly when these institutions have originally been established to stifle rather than stimulate independent thought and the questioning of authority. Linking these institutions to wider political action can help overcome these contradictions.

Seamless enactment applies itself most easily to the first two stages. Since effects are hard, if not impossible, to tie down, the notion does not apply as easily in the third stage. However, the element of student involvement is relevant here. The educational processes must be enacted by the students, and this sense of ownership is a strong influence on their own development. In a context of fully seamless enactment, the effects of the programme will not be external or separated from the educational act itself. There will be an integrated and spontaneous expression of educational and citizenship practice.

The extent to which the democratisation of school leads to the democratisation of society, or alternatively the creation of an inclusive school system leads to an inclusive society, is a complex one, and is very difficult to assess empirically. However, to some extent with seamless enactment of the educational process, the question begins to dissolve. The democratisation of school becomes an expression of the democratisation of the wider society, and is itself part of that

democratisation. There is no longer a clear separation between preparation and performance, school and society.

If seamless enactment is taken to its fullest extent, the whole framework of curricular transposition begins to disappear (or perhaps converge on a point). When the processes are fully integrated in an organic whole, there are no longer separate stages and spaces between them.

### **The three initiatives**

The empirical research in this thesis has explored the experiences of three initiatives that display contrasting aims, approaches to the educational task and results. All three face considerable challenges in trying to democratise Brazilian society through bringing immediate changes in young people's approaches to the political.

Of the three, the MST shows the most evident instances of seamless enactment. There are strong links between the different stages of the educational process, with teachers and students involved at all stages. As well as democratisation of the school space, young people are actively involved in political campaigning, which serves as a form of political learning. There is also evidence of community enactment, with the political learning taking place in the family space and in the life of the community as well as the school. However, the 'gravitational pull' of conventional schooling is still strong, and the MST schools sometimes slip back into non-dialogical teacher-student relations, top-down management and fragmented curricula. It is more difficult to sustain the democratic and dialogical forms of education in primary and secondary schools than in adult education and teacher education, where there is greater freedom.

One problem for the MST is that the high degree of enactment is the result of the living processes of political struggle within the movement, involving teachers and students. As can be seen in Salinas School, once the settlement becomes established, these political struggles begin to become a thing of the past, and the younger generation in particular start to lose touch with them. It will be hard for the MST to maintain this level of engagement, without some new form of movement emerging (as proposed by Cohen 2004).

The PS has also achieved a remarkable democratisation of the school space, and some instances of active political involvement. Yet, this has been restricted to those schools which have a core of teachers involved in the development of the Plural School framework, and is not universal. In addition, the PS faces significant problems in relation to the opposition of the majority of teachers and students to the framework itself. It has failed to communicate effectively with the school community, and often dismisses opposition as 'conservatism' without any attempt to understand the sources of the opposition. As seen in SMED (2002: 66), the epistemological basis of the project is not an option: it is a view that teachers "must" adopt. Ironically, then, while claiming to be 'plural', the PS ends up imposing a particular epistemological perspective on teachers (and students). Those teachers who are not constructivists, and who believe that there is a body of valid knowledge in the traditional disciplines of maths or history are effectively marginalised. This is at the root of much of the conflict over the project.

The VF, in contrast, showed evidence of a strong separation of the different stages of curricular transposition, and the lack of engagement of teachers and students in the project. There is little acknowledgement of the importance of actual democratic participation in developing citizen capacities. The programme does have a significant advantage in the clarity of its general aims, specific objectives and proposed activities, making implementation and evaluation more straightforward. A number of other projects, in contrast, suffer from a certain 'wooliness' of aims and curricular programmes. The initiative is also responding to an urgent need in Brazil, and one that is recognised by all sectors of society, namely, the existence of a democratic system in form but not in content. Its approach to rights, while promoting a degree of passivity by seeing them as something predetermined or determined in a far-off place rather than something won by the people, benefits again from clarity and promotes understanding of existing law. However, a significant problem is contained in its heavily top-down (or outside-in) approach, being developed by non-educational body, and one part of the 'establishment', with very little grass-roots involvement. This is in contrast to many other educational initiatives in Brazil (including the MST and PS) which have grown out of broad-based social movements. It remains to be seen whether teachers and other civil society organisations will feel sufficient ownership of the initiative for it to survive.

In addition, the initiative does not do enough to address deeper aspects of democracy. Part of the problem in Brazil is the deep-seated feelings of submissiveness in marginalised groups and the anti-democratic relations at the micro as well as the macro level of society. In addition, the

programme is held back by the fact that it does not aim to transform the whole of the curriculum. The programme's activities struggle to receive time and attention in an already busy school day. Beyond this, the democratic messages are often in conflict with the undemocratic practices of the rest of the school (i.e. a disjuncture in the first leap). This is not true of those schools (e.g. Caymmi) in which there is already developed citizenship awareness and democratic structures. Yet this is the type of school that least needs an intervention, and the programme does little to reach out to students in greater need.

Neutrality is a problematic aspect for all three initiatives. While the MST is constructivist in its rhetoric, it has a strong political line and in practice little leeway is given to alternative views. The approach is of slowly bringing all towards the right way of seeing things rather than allowing people's views to emerge independently. In this, the PS has a more authentic commitment to the development of autonomy in the students. While teachers present their own views to the students, there is no single perspective that is endorsed by the framework. The VF has an explicit commitment to impartiality, which is maintained in all instances. However, it is strongly subject to the critiques of Paulo Freire and critical pedagogy theorists that a neutral position ends up supporting the injustices of the status quo. Since the students are unable to discuss substantive political issues and analyse disadvantage on the basis of gender, race and social class, they are unable to develop a deeper understanding of Brazilian society.

The MST is aided in its work by a very high level of consensus over the general aims of the movement and by extension over the educational aims. However, this level of unity can also squeeze out spaces for difference. Again, the PS is more responsive to this requirement. Yet both suffer from difficulties of maintaining the principle of systematisation of grassroots pedagogical experience. While both explicitly state that the frameworks have been constructed through the experiences of educators and students on the ground, the systematisation in writing has led to a crystallisation of those forms. The written principles are then concretised in the individual local contexts. While this may lead to a creative dialectic between the different levels, in practice it can lead to a top-down imposition. Certainly, a number of teachers in the PS perceive it in this way.

It is the Plural School that plays most attention to the notion of inclusion, and has made significant strides in practising inclusion as well as just discussing it. The most prominent aspects involve the integration of those with disabilities into the mainstream classroom. While there is

little explicit emphasis on gender, the initiative has women as key protagonists in its establishment and implementation, as co-ordinators as well as teachers, providing important role models for the female students. In apparent support of this, observations showed female students taking the lead in decision-making bodies, and participating actively in the classroom and school in general. This is in stark contrast to the low representation of women in political roles in the wider society in Brazil. The same was true of the other two initiatives: both the MST and VF were characterised by a commitment to gender equality and the active participation of female students. Whether the active participation of girls within the school translates into greater participation outside is an important question this thesis cannot answer.

The addressing of social class and race was more uneven across the initiatives. The PS and the MST had an explicit commitment to working with the most disadvantaged groups. In the case of the MST, this is focused on the landless community, but links are made to the wider working class struggle. The PS framework aims first and foremost to include those historically at the margins of the school system. It has not always achieved this -- there still being significant problems in reaching out to the *favela* communities -- but the process is ongoing. The VF, in contrast, has little awareness of social class in the aims of the initiative, nor in its activities in practice. The programme is primarily active in private schools and public schools with existing EFC initiatives. There is little attempt to engage the most marginalised communities. Engagement with the issue of race was also lacking. Unlike VF and the MST, the PS did have an explicit commitment to debating issues of race and promoting Afro-descendant culture in particular. Yet even here, implementation was irregular.

A critique that can be made of the notion of inclusion in general is that it can be disempowering for the marginalised communities in question. Inclusion is something those on the inside do to those on the outside. It implies action on the part of those already empowered. From this perspective, the MST approach of the social movement, where the marginalised communities take action themselves in an ongoing struggle, appears a more desirable form of political transformation.

Unlike the other two initiatives, the PS does not include a specifically political component in terms of knowledge of current affairs, political structures and principles. It remains to be seen whether focusing on educational inclusion in general terms -- rather than a specific focus on democratic institutions and processes as seen in the VF, or alternatively on knowledge and

understanding of human rights – is sufficient for equipping young people for political participation outside school. An interesting question of this sort is raised by Silva and Mello (2001: 6), who ask whether students living through the more supportive environment of the Plural School will be capable of facing up to the mechanisms of social exclusion in later life.

How do these initiatives speak to other experiences of EFC around the world? In terms of the general orientations, there is much in common between the VF initiative and the work of Bernard Crick (and consequently the provision for citizenship education in the English National Curriculum). This can be seen in its attempts to reduce apathy by showing people the importance of politics and their ability to make a difference, and secondly to reduce cynicism by showing that the political process, including the messy business of compromise, is not inherently immoral and tainted by self-interest. They also share the limitations of lack of attention to the political significance of pedagogical relations, and only a 'weak' form of criticality in relation to societal structures and institutions (McCowan 2006b). The MST and PS, despite the limitations highlighted above, can provide new directions and inspiration for citizenship education in countries like the UK, through showing the importance of Freirean dialogue and radical school democratisation. Yet, it is unclear how far this type of approach is viable in a centralised school system, in the absence of insertion in a wider context of political transformation.

One clear point arising from the thesis concerns the dangers of impositions of ideals of citizenship on students. This is both very unlikely to succeed (because students will always reinterpret and recast the messages) and undesirable, through being contrary to the democratic principles on which the initiative is based.

### **Future directions**

Some elements of curricular transposition need to be explored in greater depth. In relation to the first stage of the transposition from overarching aims to curricular programmes, investigation is needed into the questions of how the transposition relates to elements of content and form in the curriculum (i.e. the material of the syllabus and the way that it is taught), and the division of the curricula into the components of knowledge, skills and values. These elements can be seen to occupy an intermediary position in the process of curricular transposition. On one hand, they

represent ends to which the educational activities are oriented. Yet on the other, they are means to the achieving of the wider political goals of the initiatives.

A number of other questions remain to be addressed. One of them is the location of *praxis* within the framework, being a dialectic of understanding and action, in which means are not decided beforehand, but are developed during the process of implementation. The discussion in chapter 6 tends to assume a monodirectional movement from ends to means, but in reality the former can also be modified in light of the latter, as argued by Dewey (1916) and more recently by Suissa (2006) and Dwight and Garrison (2003). This is particularly relevant in relation to ideas of seamless enactment. Further analysis also needs to be made of the significance of aims being conscious and explicit or not. Further forms of rationale – such as ‘intuition’ – may also be proposed.

In relation to implementation, this thesis did not present a typology of factors affecting implementation -- although different forms were discussed, such as teachers, political context, school environment, and family and community influences. There was little space here to go into depth in this area (a whole thesis could have focused on this one aspect). Further empirical research is needed to understand this process of transposition from the ideal to the real particularly in terms of the role of teachers, and question such as their personal autobiographies and teacher education.

As emphasised in chapter 8, the thesis could not provide a full assessment of the effects on students. A longitudinal study would be necessary to understand more fully how the initiatives have influenced the political lives of the students. However, I also argue that in any event it may be impossible to fully capture the effects of initiatives of this sort. There may always be an aspect of dynamic human interaction that escapes the researcher’s desire for certainty. Lastly, in relation to curricular transposition, an aspect to be explored is the absence of the fourth side of the square in the model. This fourth stage would link effects to the creation of new ideals of citizenship. A desire for completeness leads us to want to complete the figure, yet it is not clear whether the process is in fact or should be cyclical.

Related to this, there is a need for more in-depth research on the nature of student participation. This thesis could only provide a rough sketch of the ways in which students were involved in decision-making in the school. It is necessary to look more closely at the dynamics involved in



decision-making bodies, and the way these opportunities contribute to longer term empowerment. In addition, there is the question of the balance that should be struck in political learning between focus on local (or school) issues, or larger-scale national and global issues. Participation in political actions outside the school -- such as the mobilisations for new school premises in the PS -- also need to be researched in greater depth, to see the extent to which they were student initiated and led (as in Roger Hart's [1992] 'ladder of participation'). In the case of Barroso School, (perhaps unusually) the mobilisations were successful: it would also be useful to explore the extent to which this success enhanced the sense of efficacy of the students.

Another area that needs further exploration is the influence of the promoting body and the location of educational provision. This thesis has discussed how the existence of the MST as a social movement, and the learning experiences engaged in by students by living in landless communities that are part of an ongoing political struggle, has enabled the initiative to provide a more effective citizenship learning environment than the VF which is not linked to a wider political project. The location of the PS framework within the wider context of democratisation in the city of Belo Horizonte appeared to be more influential in bringing about school democratisation than the existence of bodies such as the *grêmios*, which were an intense learning experience for those few people involved, but not for the majority.

Yet all three use formal schooling for the promotion of this EFC. The issue of placing too much expectation on schools was raised by the headteacher Jessica, who joked that whereas in the past people used to say, "Only God can save you", now they say, "Only school can save you"! It might be unrealistic to expect schools to bring the types of changes that we would like, especially if not in conjunction with other arenas in society.

Through this thesis an argument has been developed in favour of harmony and seamlessness between the different stages of transposition, and between different parts of the curriculum and the school system. Yet, as explored in Unterhalter (1999), education represents a space that is relatively autonomous from the sphere of citizenship, so it is perhaps unavoidable that there will be some degree of unpredictability. Education is not just an entitlement of citizenship, and citizenship is not a straightforward educational trajectory. Moreover, it could be argued that it is the leaps themselves that are desirable. It might be that the beauty of education is the step into the abyss, its unpredictable nature.

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## Appendix 1

### Details of focus schools

#### **MST**

##### 1. Salinas school

A small primary school located in an *assentamento* close to a large metropolitan area. The school was officially founded in 1994, and is funded by the state government. Secondary provision has recently started. There is another school in the *assentamento*, with grades 1-4 only. The school serves as the administration base for the itinerant schools in the state, which cannot administer their own services such as school meals.

##### 2. Treviso School

A small primary school in a remote location, 40 minutes along a dirt track to the nearest small town. The *assentamento* was created in 1989, by people who came from the high-profile Fazenda Anoni occupation, and there are currently approximately 120 families. The school has provision from infant education to 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and is funded by the state government. There is no secondary provision, since there are not sufficient students to warrant it, so for this level the students have to go to the nearby town.

A visit was also made to an *acampamento* school, where class observations and informal discussions were carried out.

#### **Plural School**

##### 1. Barroso School

A medium-size primary and secondary school located in a busy area in the centre of Belo Horizonte. The school was founded in 1997 as part of the Plural School reforms, and some of the current teachers were personally involved in the development of the framework. The school was initially in a different location, with poorer facilities: it moved to its current site in 1999 after a long campaign. There are morning, afternoon and evening sessions. Pupils come from different parts of the city and even the suburban areas.

## 2. Cantagalo School

A medium-sized primary and secondary school founded in 1982, and located fairly near the centre of Belo Horizonte. The school is situated on the edge of a favela, with widespread poverty, in some cases child malnutrition and a strong presence of drug trafficking in the local community. The teachers at the school do not on the whole have a personal involvement with the development of the Plural School framework.

While not one of the key focus schools, research was also carried out in Bandeirante School in 2005, and some data, particularly that relating to the grêmio, was used. This school catered historically for the children of middle-class public sector workers, and has a traditional ethos. A visit was also made in 2006 to Tomás Moreira School, located in a suburban favela, one displaying innovative forms of community interaction, including school-based small businesses.

### **Voter of the Future**

All schools are located in the state capital.

#### 1. Caymmi School

A new private school, with a distinctive progressive philosophy developed by the headteacher. Primary and secondary provision.

#### 2. Amazonas School

A private school catering for the traditional elites of the city. Primary and secondary provision.

#### 3. Minas School

A state secondary school with a strong academic record.

#### 4. Morães School

A small municipal primary school (1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> grades only).

5. Viola School

A municipal primary and secondary school in a neighbourhood with high levels of poverty and violence.

A visit was also made to a school participating in the programme in the Federal District, located in an impoverished satellite town of the capital.

## Appendix 2

### Details of interviews referred to in text

#### **Plural School**

##### *Municipal Secretariat of Education of Belo Horizonte (SMED)*

Luciana (CO), 29/9/05

Darcy (CO), 29/9/05

Kelly (CO) & Julia (CO), 3/8/06

##### *Barroso School*

Dora (DH), 24/6/05

Sueli (ST) & Lucas (ST), 24/6/05

Ermenegilda (HT), 22/9/05

Segundo (TE), 4/8/06

##### *Cantagalo School*

Neide (PC), 9/6/05

Jessica (HT), 3/8/06

Students, secondary 1<sup>st</sup> year, 2/8/06

*Bandeirante School*

Thaís (ST) & Silvia (ST), 10/6/05

**MST**

*State coordination centre (Rio Grande do Sul)*

Nilda (CO), 4/8/05

Marco (CO) and Maria Paula (CO), 29/8/05

*Salinas School*

Horácio (DH), 6/7/05

Aline (ST), 13/7/05

Roger (TE), 17/8/05

Elizete (TE), 17/8/05

Yoni (TE), 25/8/05

Primary students, 7<sup>th</sup> grade, 8/8/05

Ruth (HT), 16/6/06

*Treviso School*

Vicente (HT), 1/8/05

Roberta (TE), 2/8/05

Rita (TE) & Jorge (TE), 2/8/05

Daniela (TE) & Delson (TE), 27/6/06

Primary students, 8th grade, 28/6/06

### **Voter of the Future**

1. Yanomia

#### *Regional Electoral Tribunal*

Antonio (CO), 5/9/05

Edson (CO), 28/9/06

#### *Viola School*

Primary students, 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> grades, 9/9/05

#### *Morães School*

Anabela (TE), 8/9/05

Primary students, 4<sup>th</sup> grade, 9/9/05

#### *Amazonas School*

Glauco (TE), 8/9/05

Pamela (PC), 25/5/06



*Caymmi School*

Diane (PC) & Carol (PC), 24/5/06

Cassia, Robson, Pedro & Edu (ST), 29/5/06

*Minas School*

Rita (TE) 26/5/06

Carla (ST), 31/5/06

2. Seconia

Amanda (CO), 21/6/05

Sonia (HT), 22/6/05

Note

CO: Coordinator (official or administrator outside schools)

HT: Head teacher

DH: Deputy head

PC: Pedagogical coordinator (advisory position within schools)

TE: Teacher

ST: Student

## Appendix 3

### Interview question outline

#### **Coordinators, Plural School** (English translation)

##### Personal background and job role

1. How long have you been involved in the Plural School initiative?
2. What exactly is your role?
3. What is your previous experience in the area of education?

##### General orientations of the Plural School

4. Can you explain in your own words what the Plural School is?
5. What are its specific aims and objectives?
6. How does the Plural School differ from a conventional school?

##### Approach to citizenship and education

8. How do you understand citizenship?
7. Where does citizenship stand among the aims of the Plural School?
9. What is your understanding of inclusion? Does the initiative address issues of gender? Race? Disability?

##### Educational activities

10. How does education influence citizenship?
12. Do conventional schools equip young people for citizenship? What is different about the Plural School in this regard?
13. What kinds of participatory bodies exist in the schools? (e.g. schools councils, student assemblies etc)
14. What kinds of classroom activities are conducive to the development of citizenship?

##### Implementation and effects

14. What obstacles or difficulties are faced in the implementation of the Plural School framework?
15. How could it be implemented more effectively?
16. How have teachers responded to the framework?
17. Is there diversity in the ways teachers interpret the ideas of the Plural School?
18. What effects has the initiative had on the students?
19. Which directions would you like to see the initiative taking in the future?

## Appendix 4

### Interview transcript

#### **Excerpt of interview with students at Caymmi School (Original)**

- TM: Podem falar primeiro quantos anos vocês têm e em qual série estão?
- Cassia: Todos têm 17 e estamos no terceiro ano.
- TM: Todos no mesmo ano então. Então vão terminar já este ano. Sabem o que vão fazer depois?
- Cassia: Direito.
- Rogério: História.
- Paulo: Administração.
- Marcelo: Eu ainda estou indeciso.
- TM: Melhor assim. Daí fica com as opções abertas. Vão fazer vestibular? Vão fazer faculdade?
- Cassia: É.
- TM: Vão ficar aqui em \*\*\*<sup>35</sup>?
- Cassia: \*\*\*.
- Paulo: \*\*\*.
- Marcelo: Eu vou ficar em \*\*\*.
- Rogério: Mas eu vou mas depois volto.
- TM: Ah, depois volta. Podem falar como foi esse projeto de que vocês participaram?

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<sup>35</sup> Words deleted for reasons of anonymity.

Rogério Bem, o referendo.

TM: Que são os dois?

Rogério É o referendo, né, que é a legalização não, da, do, comércio, é a proibição, não, do comércio de armas, né.

TM: E a outra?

Cassia: Eleitor do Futuro.

TM: Falem sobre o Eleitor do Futuro.

Cassia: Eleitor do Futuro, é, tem palestras, juiz do, juiz do tribunal eleitoral, e a votação em si acontece como se fosse nas urnas, na, na

Rogério: Tem todo um processo, tipo, como se participasse da eleição e também se estivesse dentro dos moldes eleitorais, como a gente mesmo eleger representantes de turma fosse um político fazendo campanha, tudo. Tipo, a gente envolvido com a eleição de fora, que vai ter, tipo numa sociedade, e também aqui dentro da escola participando já, tipo, de forma efetiva, tipo sendo ideal político.

Marcelo: E esse projeto veio assim para que o aluno venha saber e se conscientizar em escolher, né, a pessoa exata, correta, não se deixar, não deixar ser levado por falsidade de políticos, venda de votos, ele tem todo esse processo, por exemplo.

Cassia: Mas eu também achava que ele não é tão válido assim.

TM: Por que?

Cassia: A idéia é ótima como teoria política, mas poderia inserir a política de uma forma diferente, é, não tornando esse aluno um simplório eleitor e sim um político, né, fazer, acaba sendo até que ele se torna um político, assim, porque você tendo senso crítico de que a construção de uma praça, que o asfalto nas ruas não é um favor pra você e sim obrigação, você tendo esse senso, tendo essa noção e sabendo que esse é um político social participando de movimentos de juventude, você vai saber quem eleger, vai saber em quem votar.

TM: E então o que que estava faltando no projeto?

Cassia: Eu acho, é, essa mesma, essa participação dos jovens pra política, fazer o jovem gostar da política, que ele perceba que política não é só aquilo que acontece em Brasília, não é o que acontece no Palácio do Governador, que

ele pode fazer política daí no dia-a-dia, política faz parte da nossa vida no dia-a-dia.

Rogério: Acho que muitos jovens já pensam: ah, a política, eu antes era assim, pensa: a política, ah, é um negócio chato, não sei o que, e até hoje eu acho que todo jovem é assim, quando fala em política já pensa numa coisa, quase todo né, já pensa uma coisa chata, monótona, tipo, porque até o brasileiro acha aqui já é meio, que, ele não acredita mais nos políticos, então ele já acha que: ah, jornal, tudo, num, e esse projeto, como a \* te falou, deveria ser mais um, deveria ser mais um, um tipo de direcionamento pra que as pessoas passem a gostar e também a, a enxergar o que pode melhorar, através de, tipo, analisar os políticos, a política em si. Mas quem passa a não gostar da política é propriamente a sociedade, é através dela que faz com que os que ainda estão começando a sociedade nesse meio, não gostam. E também a falta de cooperação, a falta de confiança que não existe na sociedade com a política. A gente não confia mais nos candidatos. A idéia principal que esse juiz do Tribunal Eleitoral, né, passa para os jovens que estão nos projetos é que o Antonio.

TM: O Antonio?

Rogério: O Antonio.

TM: Ele veio pra cá dar palestra?

Rogério: Foi.

TM: Só ele? Ou mais alguém?

Rogério: Só ele.

Paulo: Foi. Primeiramente foi só ele, né, \*\* depois representantes do, veio ele, o Vice-Governador, com mais frequência do que \* . A idéia principal que ele passa, assim, segundo o meu ponto de vista, é que, através do projeto, os erros que eles cometeram, ao contrário dos políticos que hoje são considerados corruptos e ladrões, que fazem uma série de coisas contra o país, não venhamos também nós, não venhamos cometer esses erros que eles cometeram. Ter que votar pras pessoas que estão erradas, pra pessoas que cometem ainda esse tipo de \*, tudo mais.

Cassia: Acho que, acho um pouco, ainda mais que palestra pra jovem é muito entediante. Chegar na frente, pegar microfone, ainda mais ainda usar o microfone, porque você pegou o microfone você está se considerando superior, todo, todas as atenções voltadas pra você. Palestra pra jovem tem que ser em forma de oficinas, você em roda, sentado no mesmo nível, conversando no mesmo nível, fazendo dinâmicas, ficava entediante, tanto

que no final você estava pouco desperto e também o jovem ele gosta muito de questionar, se não tiver espaço pra ele questionar, ele vai nem prestar mais atenção. Pelo menos eu sou assim, se não me deixa questionar é porque estão querendo me impor algo.

TM: E nesse caso não te deixaram questionar?

Cassia: Não, deixaram, deixaram bastante até.

TM: E o conteúdo do que ele estava falando?

Rogério: Algumas coisas também não concordei. Estou mesmo assim sem concordar também. Ele falou sobre, que tem que, ele falou sobre, tipo, as pessoas mais pobres não têm consciência pra votar, não sei o que, que tem que fazer, tipo, pra uma pessoa votar tem que ter uma estrutura escolar, tem que ter uma base escolar, tudo, mas aí vai já da, dos próprios políticos que não querem que isso aconteça pra eles monopolizar as pessoas. E então eu acho que, eu não acredito em nada na política, eu vou, nem nos políticos, né, eu vou votar este ano, mas é o que, é o que falaram lá na, no debate, lá com eles. Que uma pessoa, ela está passando fome, eles falaram né, ela não vai olhar pra, vai, tipo, ela vai votar pra quem ajudar ela naquele momento, porque ela está pensando em saciar a sua fome e tudo. Ela é chamada "puta de voto" porque os políticos, eles distribuem alimentos no interior, eles dão telhas, dão tijolos, falam que os que não têm condições logicamente vão votar, inclusive eles entendem que, eles acabam fazendo a pobreza que faz com que eles

Cassia: E isso eles não vão, é uma coisa que eu digo, assim, a educação pública não vai, não vai ter melhora, pelo menos eu não acredito que vai ter melhora, porque o político não quer, o político não quer que o jovem tenha essa consciência. Que ele tenha a, que ele saiba que ele tem direito a uma educação de qualidade, a uma saúde de qualidade, por que vão melhorar a educação?

### (Translation to English)

TM: Can you say first how old you are and what grade you're in?

Cassia: We're all 17 and we're in the 3rd year [secondary].

TM: All in the same year then. So you're going to finish this year. Do know what you're going to do afterwards?

Cassia: Law

Rogério: History

Paulo: Business studies

Marcelo: I'm not sure yet.

TM: That's good. That way you keep your options open. Are you going to do the entry exam? Are you going to university?

Cassia: Yes

TM: Are you going to stay in \*\*\*?

Cassia: \*\*\*

Paulo: \*\*\*

Marcelo: I'm going to stay in \*\*\*

Rogério: I'm going but I'll come back afterwards.

TM: Ah, you'll come back afterwards. Can you tell me how this project was that you participated in?

Rogério: Which of the two things?

TM: What were the two things?

Rogério: There was the referendum, that was the legalisation or the prohibition of the sale of arms.

TM: And what was the other one?

Cassia: Voter of the Future

TM: Tell me about Voter of the Future.

Cassia: Voter of the Future is, there are lectures, the judge of the, the judge of the Electoral Tribunal and the vote itself happens as if it were with the real voting machines.

Rogério: There's a whole process, like as if you were participating in the election and also in the same format as the election, with us choosing class representatives as if it were a politician doing a

campaign and everything. Like, we were involved in the election outside, the one that there's going to be, like in society, and also here inside the school we're already participating, like, in an effective way, like being an ideal politician.

**Marcelo:** And this project came so that the pupils can come to know and become more aware about choosing, you know, the right, the correct person, not to let themselves, not to let themselves be taken in by the falseness of politicians, vote buying, it has this whole process for example.

**Cassia:** But I actually thought that it's not as worthwhile as that.

**TM:** Why?

**Cassia:** The idea's great as a political theory, but it could integrate politics in a different way, not making the pupil a simple voter, but rather a politician, I mean, it ends up being that he becomes a politician, like, because when you've got the critical sense that the building of a square, the paving of the roads is not a favour for you, but an obligation, having this sense, having this notion and knowing that you are a social politician participating in youth movements, you are going to know who to elect, you're going to know who to vote for.

**TM:** And so what was missing in the project?

**Cassia:** I think that it's what I was saying, the participation of the youth in politics, making the young person like politics, making him see that politics is not just what happens in Brasilia, it's not what happens in the Palace of the Governor, that he can do politics in day-to-day life, politics is part of our everyday lives.

**Rogério:** I think that many young people already think, "Oh, politics!" Before I was like that, I thought, "Politics, oh, it's a boring business, I don't know what", and even today I think that all young people are like that, when you speak of politics they just think of something, almost everyone, already thinks of something boring, monotonous, like, because the Brazilians think pretty much, that they don't believe in politicians any more, so they think that: the newspaper, everything, and this project, like Cassia told you, it should be a more, a type of orientation so that people come to like and, to see what they can improve, through, like, analysing politicians, and politics itself. But it's society itself that really doesn't like politics, and that's why those who are just starting in the environment of society don't like it. It's also the lack of



cooperation, the lack of trust with politics which exist in society. The principal idea that the judge of the Electoral Tribunal you know, Antonio, passes to the young people who are in the project.

TM: Antonio?

Rogério: Antonio.

TM: Did he come here to give a lecture?

Rogério: Yes

TM: Just him? Or did someone else come?

Rogério: Just him.

Paulo: Yes. At the start it was just him, I mean, once two representatives came, him and the Deputy Governor, but most often it was just him. The main idea that he puts across, like, from my point of view, is that, through the project, the mistakes that they make, in contrast to the politicians that today are considered corrupt and robbers, who do a series of things against the country, that we also don't come, that we don't come to commit those mistakes that they committed. Not to vote for the people who are on the wrong path, the people who commit this type of crime, and everything else.

Cassia: I think that, a bit, what's more, lectures are very boring for young people. Getting up at the front, picking up the microphone, and even more using the microphone, by picking up the microphone you are considering yourself superior, with all, all attention centred on you. Lectures for young people have to be in the form of workshops, everyone in a circle, sitting on the same level, speaking on the same level, doing activities. It was a bit boring, so that at the end you weren't really awake. And also young people like to question, if there's no space to question they're not going to pay attention any more. At least I'm like that, if they don't let me question, it's because they're trying to impose something on me.

TM: And in this case they didn't let you question?

Cassia: No, they did let you, actually they let you quite a lot.

TM: And what was the content of what he was speaking about?

Rogério: Some things also I didn't agree with. All the same I'm really not in agreement as well. He spoke about, that you have to, he spoke

about, sort of, the poorer people don't have the awareness to vote, I don't know what, they have to do, sort of, that for a person to vote you have to have structured schooling, you have to have a basis of schooling, and everything. But you see, it's the politicians themselves who don't want this to happen so they can monopolise people. So I think that, I don't believe in anything in politics, I'm going, not even in the politicians, you know, I'm going to vote this year, but it's what, it's what they said there in the debate, there with them. That a person, he's hungry, they said didn't they, he's not going to look at, I mean, he's going to vote for whoever helps him at that particular moment, because he's thinking about satisfying his hunger and everything. He's called a 'vote prostitute' because the politicians, they distribute food in the interior<sup>36</sup>, they give tiles, they give bricks to the people who are short of money. Of course they're going to vote. Even they understand that, they end up making the poverty which allows them to ....[cut off]

Cassia: And they're not going to, it's something that I say, like, public education is not going to, it's not going to get better, at least I don't think it's going to get better, because the politicians don't want it, the politicians don't want the young person to have this awareness. That he has, that he knows he has the right to quality education, quality health care, why are they going to improve education?

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<sup>36</sup> Outside the state capital.

## Appendix 5

### Observation notes

Barroso School

Thursday, 23rd June 2006

Teacher: Segundo

Class: 1st year, secondary. 23 students.

9 p.m.            Quiet chatting in the class as the teacher comes in. He introduces the theme for the day as the "Great navigations of Europeans to the Americas". Once the students are settled, the teacher asks a student to read from the textbook.

There appear to be five students with hearing difficulties. A sign language interpreter is in the room and translates the speech of the other students and the teacher to them.

9.10            The student finishes the text. The teacher says, "Who was Christopher Columbus?" A couple of students say he was the discoverer of America. The teacher waits for more answers. After a while another student says, "No, he was the exploiter, not the discoverer". The teacher says he is pleased someone remembered. A discussion develops about portrayals of discovery, about how it is usually seen from the European view, and about how the people forget that the Americas were already inhabited.

The teacher asks me to tell the class how discoveries of the Americas are portrayed in history in the UK. I answer briefly that for the most part that there is little treatment of the colonial period, but that it is usually shown from the perspective of the European.

9.25            Discussion moves on to drugs, talking about the new plants found in the Americas.

Most students are paying attention at the moment. There are high levels of involvement in the class. One pupil is sleeping, but there is little chatting. The students are participating in questions and discussion.

9.30            Another student reads the next passage of text.

The deaf students ask questions regularly in sign language to the interpreter: the interpreter answers them directly rather than passing questions to the teacher.

The discussion moves to the Church. The teacher asks, "Does the Pope still have power?" A few students answer. The teacher then asks, "Was the Pope consulted during

the Iraq war? No, the UN was". The teacher draws out the argument that people around the world were upset about the war because the UN was not consulted. The UN is seen to have a similar function as that of the Church at the time of the European invasion of the Americas.

One student says, "The UN can't be that powerful since it didn't manage to stop the war". Another student asks, "Why did no country help Iraq?" A debate develops.

One student says, "Sorry to any evangelicals here, but the Church is just filling its pockets." The teacher tried to calm the discussion down: "Let's not go into this topic". He returns to the historical context.

[Interesting: the action of evangelical churches is considered a controversial topic - teacher prefers not to go into it].

The discussion moves on to corruption. One student says, "Like today the politicians use half the money to buy medicines and put the other half in their pockets".

The interpreter passes a question from a deaf student on to the teacher. The teacher alerts the rest of the class to it.

9.45 The teacher points out the locations of the European invasion on the map. He explains North, East, South and West to the students. The teacher has to explain that the blue parts on the map are the ocean and the orange parts are the land.

[Evidence of poor basic skills of a number of the students here].

The teacher puts a question to the class, "Do you think that only the Portuguese were here in this period?" The students are made to think and respond. He goes on to describe the partnership between the kings and the bourgeoisie in the colonial period. He explains the idea of absolutism.

The bell goes and the class ends.

## Appendix 6

### List of documents referred to in text

#### Barroso School:

I Congresso Político Pedagógico: Democracia, Ética e Inclusão (2004)

Rede de Trocas (3o Caderno) (2001)

#### Minas School:

Projeto Eleição Aluno Representante e Professor Conselheiro: “Acreditar no Jovem É Construir o Futuro” (2004)

#### Morães School:

O Voto e o Direito de Escolher (2004)

#### Padre Cícero School:

Projeto Eleitor do Futuro (2004)

#### Salinas School:

Plano de Estudos (2005)

Regimento (2002)

#### TRE, Seconia:

Programa Eleitor do Futuro (2005)

*Ele, Heitor do Futuro* (2004)

#### TRE, Letoria:

Programa Eleitor do Futuro (2004)

**TRE, Yanomia:**

**Concurso de Redação: Programa Eleitor do Futuro (2005a)**

**Regulamento – Referendo (2005b)**

**Programa Eleitor do Futuro (2003)**

**Treviso School:**

**Da Conquista da Terra à Produção de Conhecimentos (2003)**

**Projeto Politico-Pedagogico (2001)**

**TSE:**

**Programa Eleitor do Futuro (2002)**

## Appendix 6

### Key conceptions of the initiatives

The main differences between the three initiatives across these four questions are shown in the following table:

	<b>MST</b>	<b>Escola Plural</b>	<b>Eleitor do Futuro</b>
<b>Rights/ duties</b>	Strong emphasis on rights. Particular emphasis on social rights, and especially rights to the land. Some emphasis on duties in relation to the struggle of the working class, and the need for self-sacrifice.	Key element is the right to inclusion. Within this, the right to learning, and to participate in the construction of knowledge. Little emphasis on duties.	Emphasis on legal rights, those of the Constitution and international declarations. Some emphasis on duties in relation to respect for the law, and responsible voting.
<b>Universality/ difference</b>	Little emphasis on difference, apart from the specific requirements of rural peoples. Yet strong support for equality between different social groups, including in relation to gender. Collective valued more than individual.	Strong support for difference. Universal rights, but differential needs of groups addressed, including pedagogical needs.	Little attention to difference and identity in general. Citizens seen as legal entities with equal formal rights.
<b>Local/ national/ global</b>	Attention paid to all three levels: local environmental care and local knowledge; national movement for national change; also engaged in global issues such as debt, imperialism etc.	Not clearly defined. Local level a key site for political action. Municipality is reference point for policies.	Predominately national: citizen of nation-state within national legal framework. Some emphasis on international law and rights, as well as voting in local elections and addressing local problems.
<b>Conformity/ criticality</b>	Strongly critical of capitalist structures, national government etc. Little encouragement of critique of movement itself.	Emphasis on critical attitudes, yet left to individual teacher.	Aim to produce critical voters, yet within pre-established structures of liberal democracy.

